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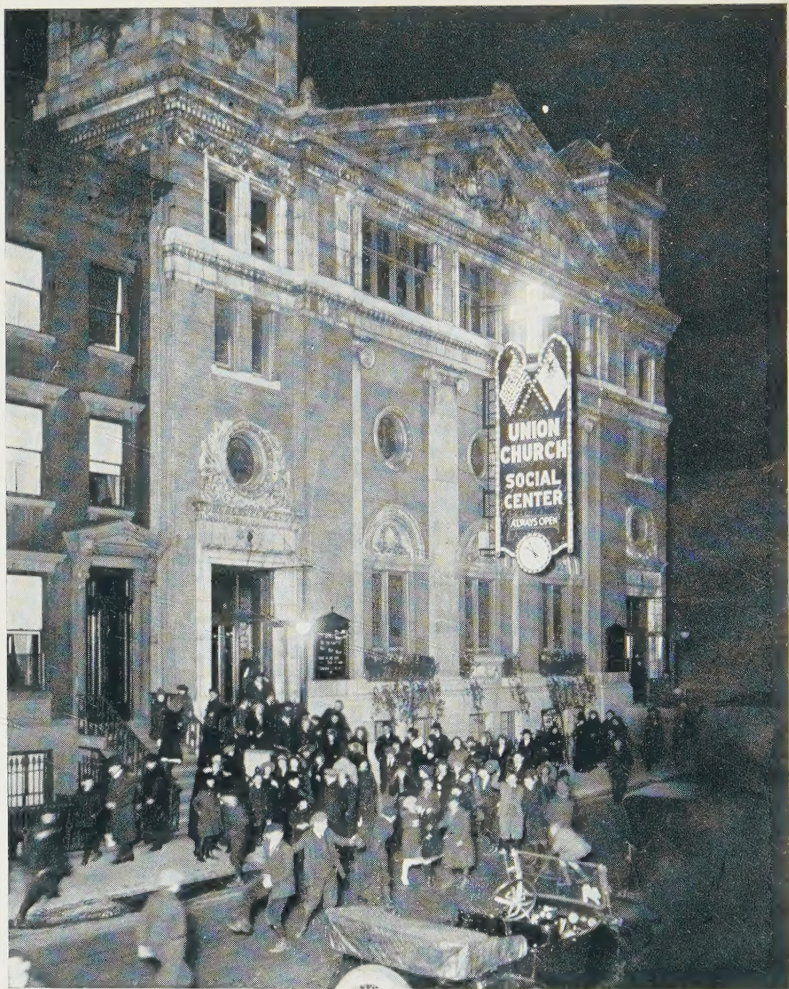
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STANDING ROOM ONLY

REV. WILLIAM L. STIDGER



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THE LARGEST CHURCH ELECTRICAL SIGN IN THE WORLD. UNION METHODIST CHURCH. OFF BROADWAY ON 48TH STREET, NEW YORK. PASTOR, DR. JOHN BENSON.

Frontispiece

STANDING ROOM ONLY

BY

REV. WILLIAM L. STIDGER

AUTHOR OF "STAR DUST FROM THE DUGOUTS,"
"OUTDOOR MEN AND MINDS," ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
BISHOP THEODORE S. HENDERSON



NEW YORK
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DR. LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

FINEST OF FRIENDS
KEENEST OF CRITICS
INTELLECTUAL INSPIRATION

AND TO THE
REV. WM. B. KING

WHO IN MY BOYHOOD DAYS
POINTED OUT TO ME
"THE WAY"

“THAT MY HOUSE MAY BE FILLED”

INTRODUCTION BY
BISHOP THEODORE S. HENDERSON

JESUS CHRIST is not interested in vacuums. An empty mind is the devil's opportunity. An empty life is the heartbreak of God. An empty church is the despair of many a well-meaning but ineffective pastor.

When Jesus Christ drew the portrait of a feast which would be a symbol of the gospel and estimated the number of invited guests, He made His calculation on the basis of: “That My house may be filled.”

That statement fairly makes one's pulse beat fast and one's brain to stretch!

What the author says in these brilliant and fascinating pages is not theory but experience. He not only preaches the filled church but he practices it. If any one doubts either the interpretation or the application of these chapters, let him do what Nathaniel was told to do when he was skeptical about the ability of Nazareth to produce the maximum man; viz.:—“Come and see!”

This author has written about what he has

proved. When John MacNeil, the famous Scotch preacher, was pastor *ad interim* of a certain city church in England, some one is reputed to have asked of what sort of a church he was pastor.

Quickly and keenly the alert Scotchman replied: "I am pastor of the kind of a church that is filled with holy memories and empty pews!"

Not so with this author, the Rev. Wm. L. Stidger. When the church, in the City of Detroit, of which he is now the Pastor was being built, some modern skeptics pleasantly taunted the administration responsible for erecting a church which would never be filled. With his accustomed vitality, virility and versatility the author of this book began his pastorate in this, perhaps the largest church auditorium in Detroit, and in four weeks' time it was overcrowded, and has remained so to this day, night after night, with "Standing Room Only" the rule, with an increase in membership of fifty people a month, until it has finally been necessary regularly to install more than six hundred extra chairs in addition to the set seating capacity of the church.

He has justified this challenge of Jesus "that My house may be filled!"

The best interpretation of this book is that which can be seen every Sunday in the author's church in Detroit; God's house is filled. And not only that; but Christ is the purpose and pas-

sion of every program of this unusual, unique and forceful preacher. Every activity centers and culminates in Christ. There is no other defense for the existence of the Church. It is a tragedy to have the church empty when it might be filled!

FOREWORD

ONCE there was a book published on the general theme of "How to Fill Churches" by a certain preacher who had not been successful in doing the thing that he described in his book. He was merely writing from theory and hearsay. A friend of mine in referring to that book delights in the following phrase, "How to Fill Churches, By an Author who has emptied Three."

"It is to smile," as the French say; for any writer realizes, at the very beginning of a book of this nature, that he must draw almost exclusively from the laboratory of his own experiences. I have never read the book in question but I cannot feel that any man could write convincingly of a thing that he has not done. Therefore if the author in question had emptied three churches and then had written a thesis on how to fill churches I would register a solemn thought that to those who read it that book did not ring true.

And it is with this preliminary statement that I offer, not an apology, but a frank statement of the fact that most of the ideas that I have set forth in this book have come out of my own experience. The matter of getting folks into a

church service is not an easy thing. One must literally follow the challenging injunction of Jesus Himself and "Go out unto the highways and byways and compel them to come in"; especially in these modern days, which produce a motion picture theater on every corner, and a house of pleasure in every other block. Bless us, we have to compete with the theater; we have to set up a challenge to the theater; and with the wonderful message that we have, it can be done and it can be done successfully.

There isn't a theater in any American city that can put on a program that will get the people as quickly, hold them consistently as long, and satisfy their souls as well, as the program that a modern preacher can put on, in his church, if he is alert and awake to the possibilities of his gospel and wise enough to dress the old Gospel in new clothes and give the vitalizing tang of variety to his service.

In three distinct types of churches the ideas and the programs and the publicity methods that I advocate herein have been tried out and tried out most successfully. One was a small church in the outskirts of San Francisco, California. These methods were next tried in a church in a comparatively small home-like town of 50,000 people at San José, California, and there, too, these methods crowded a large church beyond the limits of its seating capacity. Now, for the third

time, they are being tried out in the actual laboratory of a great, modern American city of a million souls; ninety per cent of these souls foreign born. It is a great and supposedly an indifferent city, that of Detroit, Michigan; but I am here to testify that the response has been quicker and more satisfactory and larger here than anywhere else that these methods have been tried out.

Color, light, motion; the dramatic that is buried in every human soul; the eager desire for a "Story" that every child and man and woman has in his heart; warmth, friendliness, cheer; beautiful surroundings; the joy of singing; the old and ever beautiful story of Jesus, and his power to regenerate a man from his sins, told in modern form, through great book masterpieces, which in reality are themselves great sermons; these are in a paragraph the conclusions of the book.

I am indebted to Mr. F. M. Barton, Editor of *The Expositor* of Cleveland, for his kindly interest in these pages, and for the first publication of many of these ideas in his most excellent little magazine published for preachers who are looking for a practical, workable, monthly helper. To my three Associate Pastors, Frank McLain, George Colliver, and O. R. Grattan, with whom I have worked these ideas out, I offer my gratitude and affection. To Bishops Hughes, Leonard and Henderson of my church, who gave me free rein and a curious and friendly interest, I

owe my thanks. I also make a mention of gratitude in these pages to our Church Editors who have always been alert and friendly to new ideas and methods.

I hope the book will not seem egotistical. I have been asked to put into book form the results of our work. Hundreds of letters come from preachers asking specific questions about church methods. I send forth this book as an answer to those letters. I believe that most of these methods will work in a small church as well as in a large church, and in a village as well as in a city.

I further believe that they cannot be called sensational. They may be named progressive but not sensational. If I knew it to be such I would not print a sensational ad nor perform a sensational act in church work.

But I hold in common with Bishop Wm. A. Quayle, that the one unpardonable sin of a preacher is to be uninteresting when the means are always at hand to be interesting. When it is wholly possible to conduct a fascinating church service, which, without sacrificing its spiritual sacredness, may still crowd the church, then, I think it is a high crime to do anything less.

WILLIAM L. STIDGER.

Detroit, Michigan,
April, 1921.

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STANDING ROOM ONLY

STANDING ROOM ONLY

CHAPTER I

S. O. S. CHANGED TO S. R. O.

THE magical letters S. O. S. have become familiar to us in these recent years. They mean "Save, Oh Save!" They flash forth from the wireless, spitting fire; the fire of despair! Many a church has sent out this call. Others have not sent it out because they are too dead even to get the electric power necessary to send these brief letters flashing for help.

"S. R. O." means "Standing Room Only."

They are cryptic letters but full of meaning. In church circles these two phrases are the antithesis of each other. They are black and white. They are the north pole and the south pole. They are the Arctic circle and the equator. They are night and day. They are failure and success.

Why hang out the S. O. S. when you may put out the S. R. O. sign?

I do not claim to be an authority on great preaching, but I have, partly by chance and

partly through necessity, discovered how to take down the S. O. S. and put up the S. R. O.

Heretofore the theaters have had a boasted monopoly on the sign, S. R. O.

THE STORY SERMON

The Story Sermon will take down the S. O. S. sign and put up the S. R. O. sign. By the Story Sermon I mean: sometimes a Book Sermon; sometimes a Verse Sermon; sometimes a Drama Sermon.

"What authority do you have for such?" I am asked.

"The best in the world!" I reply.

"What is it? Out with it!" comes the answer from conservative men.

"The authority of the parables of Jesus Christ."

Jesus Christ never preached anything else but story sermons. He knew that, after all, men are children grown up, and that they need to see their truth in color, motion and story. It is an old secret and the all-wise Master used it to its beautiful limits of power.

"And the common people heard Him gladly."

For illustration let us take "Les Miserables" of Victor Hugo, the thrillingly dramatic story of the regeneration of a human soul; "Romola," by George Eliot, the terrible and dramatic story of the degeneration of a young man, Tito by

name, a book with a text that sticks out all through its fascinating pages "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"; "The Scarlet Letter," by Hawthorne, the story of the ruthless fight of conscience against sin; "The Resurrection," by Tolstoy, which is nothing more or less than an old-fashioned "Conversion" of a sinning man who goes through all the stages of sin, conviction of sin, repentance, and salvation.

Each book is a modern sermon. The Bible is full of texts that will link themselves up with golden chains to these great truths. These books set forth Biblical teaching in new clothes; that is all; and they fascinate folks.

Tolstoy's young lawyer in "The Resurrection" has nothing more or nothing less than Saul's experience on the road to Damascus and he gets down on his knees and prays as a little child prays:

"Oh, Lord, drive out this abomination from me! Come enter within me and cleanse me."

Then a sudden sense of lightness and happiness comes over him and he goes to the window, breathes deeply as he throws up the sash and cries out:

"Oh, God, how beautiful! How beautiful! How beautiful!"

meaning, as the author says: "That which had gone on in his own soul!"

There is your story sermon, and never a more thrilling illustration of the conversion of a human soul.

Modern books are full of sermons. I might mention Peter Clarke Macfarlane's "Held to Answer," Dorothy Canfield's "The Bent Twig"; "Mutual Aid," by Kropotkin; John Masefield's "The Everlasting Mercy" and his "Hounds of Hell."

"The Everlasting Mercy" tells once again the story of the old-fashioned conversion of Saul on the way to Damascus, as does the story of "The Resurrection."

VERSE SERMONS PULL AND TUG

In addition to Masefield's "Everlasting Mercy" which I have just mentioned from the poets, Edwin Markham's "The Shoes of Happiness," "How the Great Guest Came," "The Juggler of Touraine," and "The Gates of Paradise" are each great sermons in themselves.

Sidney Lanier's "Marshes of Glynn" is a sermon in verse.

Alfred Noyes gives us a marvelous sermon in "The Forest of Wild Thyme," and Edgar Lee Masters in "The Spoon-River Anthology" has given me half a dozen sermons.

"Who Was to Blame," by O. Henry, is one of the most awakening sermons on the results of

the neglect of parents for their children that one may find on the printed page, or in the pulpit; for it burns its way into human souls with the acid of regret!

Edna St. Vincent Millay has a great poem called "Interim" and it is nothing more than a tremendously great sermon in verse.

The old poets are full of fire and suggestion; and, dramatized in the pulpit, the old, old lessons of sin, repentance, conscience, regret, regeneration may be taught with new vividness.

Phrases from certain poems that I call "Verse Sermons" are strong drawing cards for the average human being.

Some great writer says: "A verse may oft catch him who a sermon flies!" which we who preach know is true.

And it not only catches him in his soul but it catches him in his presence at church services also. That is the double magic of these Verse Sermons. They teach great truths and they get great crowds.

I have gleaned a sermon that captures the imagination of folks out of a thought of Edna St. Vincent Millay's:

"The soul can split the sky in two
And let the face of God shine through!"

And from her lines:

"God, I can push the grass apart
And lay my finger on Thy heart!"

Or from another Millay quotation:

“O God, I cried, no dark disguise
Can e’er hereafter hide from me
Thy radiant identity!”

Or again:

“And, through and over everything
A sense of glad awakening.”

From Edwin Markham I get a sermon out of:

“At the heart of the cyclone tearing the sky,
And flinging the clouds and the towers by
Is a place of central calm;
So here in the roar of mortal things,
I have a place where my spirit sings,
In the hollow of God’s palm.”

“He holdeth the sea in His hands” is the text for that poem, and I doubt not but that my friend, the poet, got his suggestion from the Book of Books.

“Anchored to the Infinite” is a sermon theme worth any man’s using:

“So we may send our little timid thought
Across the void out to God’s reaching hands—
Send out our love and faith to thread the deep—
Thought after thought until the little chord
Has greatened to a chain no chance can break,
And—we are anchored to the Infinite!”

Markham's "There Is No Time for Hate" has a sermon crammed into a nutshell:

"There is no time for hate, O wasteful friend:
Put away hate until the ages end!
Have you an ancient wound? Forget the wrong.
Out in my west a forest loud with song
Towers high and green over a field of snow,
Over a glacier buried far below!"

Joaquin Miller contributes his Verse Sermon Suggestion in:

"Who now shall accuse and arraign us?
What man shall condemn and disown?
Since Christ has said only the stainless
Shall cast at his fellows a stone?"

Or another from Miller is:

"Look starward! stand far, and unearthly,
Free soul'd as a banner unfurl'd.
Be worthy! O Brother! Be worthy!
For a God was the price of the world!"

Alfred Noyes is rich in Sermon Suggestions:

"Where, what a dreamer yet, in spite of all
Is man, that splendid visionary child
Who sent his fairy beacons through the dusk!"

Or what a flash of faith from Noyes on the Cross of Flame is here:

"Help me to seek that unknown land!
I kneel before the shrine.
Help me to feel the hidden hand
That ever holdest mine.

I kneel before the word, I kneel
Before the Cross of Flame.
I cry, as through the gloom I steal,
The glory of Thy name!"

Then comes a text from Noyes buried in these four lines:

"Whence came the 'prentice Carpenter whose voice
Hath shaken Kingdoms down, whose menial gibbet
Rises triumphant o'er the wreck of Empires
And stretches out its arms amongst the stars?"

Or that great gift of love to preach about from:

"But one thing is needful; and ye shall be true
To yourself and the goal and the God that ye seek;
Yea, the day and the night shall requite it to you
If ye love one another; if your love be not weak!"

with a bombarding climax to sermon suggestions on what might be called "The Soul Hunger" in:

"I am full-fed, and yet
I hunger!
Who set this fiercer famine in my maw?
Who set this deeper hunger in my heart?"

PEOPLE ARE THRILLED BY THE GREAT TRUTHS

These Drama Sermons, Book Sermons, and Verse Sermons give a preacher a chance to dress the old truths in new clothes. That is their chief value. Stories of the regeneration of human souls, stories of conversions, of sinning men and women, stories of great hungers in human hearts, run like quicksilver through the books of the world which live and become great literature. Just now there is a book called "The Great Hunger," by Bojer, which is a tremendous story of a great spiritual hunger in the human heart, as are Bojer's other works: "Life," "The Power of a Lie" and "Treacherous Ground."

People will crowd any church to hear Dramatic Book Sermons. I have tried them out in three great American cities and I have seen audiences jump from nothing to S. R. O. in each instance. There is no stronger drawing power that I know of than the Dramatic Book Sermon. To begin with, folks have a feeling that they will be enlightened. They will get the substance of a book so that they themselves will be able socially to talk about it. They like to do this. But they are too busy to read the new books. That is the preacher's job. He ought to keep up on the worthwhile books. He ought to bring them to his people.

In the second place these book sermons give

him a chance of preaching, in dramatic form, the great spiritual truths of the Bible. Who will doubt that William Allen White's great book, "In the Heart of a Fool," is a great fiction sermon on the text, "The fool said in his heart there is no God"? None who read it will doubt that sermon. None who use it as a sermon background will doubt that the people are spiritually stirred by its dramatic episodes. It is a tremendous sermon.

In a personal letter to the author of this book, William Allen White confirms the above paragraph in the following words:

"Like every story, 'In the Heart of a Fool' is the dramatization of a truth, and the truth I tried to dramatize in this story is this: Material rewards do not follow spiritual excellence, nor does spiritual decay bring material punishment upon it; the rewards and punishments of the material world are quite apart from spiritual excellence or deficiencies.

"I took my title 'In the Heart of a Fool' from the Proverb which declares 'The fool said in his heart there is no God,' and I used that for a text, upon which I proceeded to demonstrate the thesis set forth above."

In the third place the people hear these books spoken of. They read reviews in the papers about them. Book pages are becoming more and more popular in Sunday papers. The people are read-

ing more. The high cost of books is not stopping the sale of books. We, the preachers, owe it to our congregations to show them what the great books are.

Churches crowded with people, hundreds of chairs necessary, other hundreds turned away, intense interest, the S. O. S. sign taken down and the S. R. O. sign put up has been my experience always with Dramatic Book, Verse, and Poem Sermons founded on the Bible.

Objections? Yes, there are some. I shall answer them.

“Oh, yes, you can get a crowd with Story Sermons, and Book Sermons, but do you get souls?”

I answer that I count that Sunday wasted when somebody does not come to the altars of my church. In one church in the first year I saw 325 people kneel at the altars of the church; in another I watched them come at the rate of fifty a month. I have noticed a stronger and more spontaneous response after a Book Sermon like “Les Miserables” or “The Scarlet Letter” or “Romola” or “The Everlasting Mercy” than at any other time, especially from young people.

Three men were won by Thompson’s “The Hound of Heaven.” They responded to the lure, and the wooing, and the wonder, and the pleading and insistence of the love of the Christ as expressed in that great poem.

The second objection is: “Oh, but that isn’t

preaching "The Gospel," and I responded to that, honestly and frankly, that I, for one, have never been able to make the Christ so clear and winning, and His earnestness to save souls so real, as I have in "The Hound of Heaven" or "The Everlasting Mercy." I have never been able to make conversion so fascinating as I have through "The Resurrection." I have never been able to make sin so horrible as I have through "Romola," and sin's inevitable end so real! I have never been able to make Christ so near and dear, and so sweet and appealing as I have through "A Singular Life."

Yes, I preach the "Gospel," but I make it alive, real, saving and modern when I put it into dialogue, drama, poetry, and action and I do it to save the souls of men. And finally, I not only get overflow crowds, but I get souls saved at the altars of the church.

CHAPTER II

FOOD, FAITH, AND FUN

IT was born of the old Family Night.

It has solved the Prayer Meeting problem in a great city; solved it in such a conclusive and overwhelming way that instead of having ten at Prayer Meeting, St. Mark's has from five to six hundred every Wednesday night.

And it is Christ's way.

Christ always healed their bodily ailments; gave them earthly water to drink; and fed their hungry bodies with fish and bread before He told them of the cure that was eternal, and the water that was the water of life, and the food that was food for the soul.

In our "Food, Faith, and Fun Night" we are enacting all over again, in a modern American city church, that scene on the shores of Galilee where Jesus fed the five thousand and then preached the eternal life to them.

The old problem faced this church as to how to get folks to Prayer Meeting. Dr. McClenthen solved it by instituting what he called a "Family

Night." I have named it the "Food, Faith and Fun Night" of St. Mark's.

THE "FOOD" PART OF IT

At six o'clock we have our supper. It is served in cafeteria style and we have fed as high as five hundred at a single meal. The Circles of Service are made up of the women of the church. They ought to have every appliance to save work, including an electric washing machine for the dishes; fully equipped steam tables and a chef to help them. There are circular tables, for this gives a family a chance to get together for the evening meal just the same as they would at home. Everything is done to emphasize this family spirit. Each child of the family is there. The father comes from his store or his office down town and meets his children and wife at their table at St. Mark's on Wednesday night at six o'clock.

The women of the Circles charge only thirty-five cents for this supper, but because there is no overhead and little labor expense, they are able to clear from ten to fifty dollars an evening on their meal. This is one method that the women of the church are using to pay their Church Building Fund Pledge.

There is a fine social value in this gathering together of the families of the church about

the circular tables. Sunday School classes also take this opportunity of getting together in mid-week. They talk over their plans, and their socials and their class work. It is a very effective place for committee meetings and it gives the pastor a chance to get a more intimate touch with his people.

Following this hour of meeting together about the tables for supper comes the "Faith" part of the evening.

THE "FAITH" PART OF THE FAMILY NIGHT

From seven o'clock to eight comes the Prayer Meeting part of the evening. The folks go from the supper in the Gymnasium up to the Prayer Meeting rooms.

It will be noted that I say "rooms" instead of "room."

That is necessary, because of the great crowds that have come to our Family Festival. We have found it necessary to grade the Prayer Meetings just as we have graded the Sunday Schools in the past. This is a new thing in mid-week services; Graded Prayer Meetings; but when the whole family attends the Prayer Meeting this becomes necessary.

So we have graded ours into Adults, Intermediates, Juniors, and Primary. It is a natural grading.

The adults who come crowd the largest room that we have in St. Mark's outside of the big church auditorium. Each group has its own leader; and to each group a spiritual message is presented at every meeting. It is an inspiring thing to know that four separate Prayer Meetings are going on at the same time in the church each Wednesday evening.

This new idea of a crowded and a graded prayer meeting has attracted so much attention that newspaper photographers and preachers have visited it from points and cities as far distant as Boston and San Francisco and every night we have visitors who come to see how the new idea is working out; for if there is any regular church institution that needs the shock of new electrical life shot into its nerves it is the Prayer Meeting time and we are all eagerly seeking a solution of this ever present church problem.

The Prayer Meeting itself is filled with variety just as the evening services are. The testimony time comes first, so that it may be a free and an unhindered testimony, not influenced by what the speaker may have to say. I have found that this change of order is appealing, in that it is a new wrinkle in the order of the Prayer Meeting service. The people like to testify and they take all the time there is. The warm, cheery hour at the supper tables has opened their hearts and

lips, and thoughts and words flow freely. Then comes the "Fun" part of the evening.

THE "FUN" PART OF THE FAMILY NIGHT

The "Food" part of the big Family Festival merges very naturally into the "Faith" part. I have been asked many times whether any large per cent of those who come to the supper come to the Prayer Meeting. We have kept careful statistics on this fact and find that it averages about 96 per cent. In addition to these, large numbers come to Prayer Meeting who have not been at the supper; so all told about a hundred more people attend the prayers than go to the supper.

The Prayer Meetings end at eight o'clock and then the whole crowd goes back down to the Gymnasium. The little tots go to a special quiet games room, where under a competent physical director they play from eight to ten o'clock. In another large room the Intermediates have their games, and out on the big Gymnasium floor the adults have Mass Plays, Volley Ball, Indoor Baseball, and all games that are dear to the adult heart. The business men at our church at this time get about the only real opportunity of the week for relaxation and physical exercise and it appeals to them greatly. They do not know just why, but they look forward from week to week to this happy time. One man said to me recently:

"Between Sundays would be too long to wait if it were not for the big Wednesday night we have!"

It is a simple thing this "Food, Faith and Fun Night" at St. Mark's but it crowds our church with people on Wednesday night.

It feeds their bodies, it feeds their souls and it satisfies their social and play instincts. It is following out the example of Jesus in feeding the bodies of folks first and then their immortal souls.

It can be worked in any church, large or small. It does not require any special equipment save a kitchen. The gymnasium part does not require special equipment for we do not have very much Gym equipment, and what we do have, we cannot use on Wednesday night because of the crowds that come. We play just big, happy, games in a mass formation. The people all go away happy over their evening.

We are constantly getting accessions to the church from this "Food, Faith and Fun Night."

CHAPTER III

THE JUNIOR CHURCH IN ACTION

THE Junior Church is an established institution.

I know of one church in which it has been running for five years without a break and growing stronger each year.

It meets immediately following the Sunday School. In that respect it forms an actual physical connecting link between the church and the Sunday School. Its meeting time is from 10:45 to 11:15 A. M.

Therefore the Junior Church gets well under way before the big church begins and it is over before the sermon in the senior church starts. Thus it can be conducted by the Pastor himself, who may have his assistant, or, if he has no assistant, may have a local preacher or a layman conduct the opening part of his own service for adults while he is in the Junior Church in another part of the church building.

In San José, California, where I saw the Junior Church idea work out the most perfectly, we ran it this way: On one Sunday I went in to

the Junior Church and conducted the whole service while the Associate Pastor, or a layman, conducted the opening exercises of the big church. At 11:15 in the Junior Church we were through. We had had a regular service.

We had "sung an hymn," we had taken our offering, we had had a choir number, we had had responsive reading, prayer, a short sermon, the benediction, and I was back in my own pulpit in time to take the prayer and sermon there for the senior service. On alternate Sundays I simply went into the Junior Church and remained until eleven o'clock conducting the opening exercises, while the Associate Pastor took the sermon. This gave me a chance to be present at every service of the Junior Church and at every service of the Senior Church and it worked very smoothly.

This Junior Church was organized by Dr. George A. Miller in the early part of his five-year ministry, and it ran through two other ministries for a period of four more years and I doubt not is running in full blast to-day, a most successful institution.

This Junior Church was completely organized. It had its own Junior Church Choir, it had its own Orchestra, it had its own envelope system with the Duplex plan, a side for current expenses and a side for benevolences. There was something sacred about this envelope system to the members of the Junior Church. Children like

to pay if it is done in that way. If a parent forgets, the child never does. The child will look forward all week to the formal function of filling its envelopes, and thus this matter becomes a rite not to be neglected. This feature of the Junior Church was especially strong.

"Was the financial system finally worked through the adult church treasury?" I have often been asked.

"It was, and that very successfully," is the answer.

The collections were taken in the Junior Church but immediately turned over to the Adult Church Treasurer. The accounts were kept by the regular treasurer.

This Junior Church even had its own weekly newspaper or bulletin and this bulletin served to keep the connectional spirit alive among the Juniors. It was their official organ. They announced their own social functions through it, and kept up their Junior Church life through its pages.

They even had their own Official Board and Ladies' Aid Society, and these met each month in connection with a social event which was called "Junior Jollies" and was a regular part of the church schedule of social events, an evening looked forward to with great avidity by the Juniors of the Church.

"What ages did you limit the Junior Church

to?" is one of the first practical questions that come.

"To no age. They attended Junior Church as young as four and five. They ran up to as high as fifteen and sixteen and often college students attended the Junior Church and then went into the Senior Church at 11:15."

"But how did their membership in the Junior Church terminate and how did you get them into the Senior Church?"

"It was rather a spontaneous thing. When a boy or girl got to feeling that he was too big for the Junior Church he just naturally stopped going and we would notice that he was coming to the Senior Church. It was a sort of a promotion that meant much more because he had already been a part of the Junior Church. That made the regular church membership mean more to him."

"Of what then did the Junior Church membership consist?"

"It was a form of Preparatory Membership. We used this as a kind of Probation Class and a well-mapped-out programme by the pastors saw to it that in the Junior Church Sermons each morning, the knowledge that the Juniors ought to have, to become good church members, got to them, although not in a direct fashion. It solved the old problem of Probation Membership for children."

"What connecting links with the church did you have?"

"Once every two months, at the regular communion time, the Junior Church came into the big auditorium in a body and was the first group to partake of the Communion. That was a very close and a very tender connecting link and the children literally loved that service and looked forward to it with great joy because they came in as a body and there was a real distinction in the event."

"Did any large percentage of the Juniors escape from the church?"

"Through five years that the statistics were kept, it was determined that more than ninety per cent of the children of the Junior Church finally came to be members of the Senior Church. It was the finest feeder for the church proper that I have ever seen. We seldom lost children. It was a vital connection between the Sunday School and the Church not only in the actual physical and time-connection on Sunday morning, but also in the spiritual connection. It was a chain of three golden links, the Sunday School, the Junior Church and the Senior Church."

"So you feel that you stopped that woeful leakage of young people between Sunday School and Church time; and between Sunday School membership and church membership?"

"I do!"

CHAPTER IV

VITALIZING VARIETY

VARIETY! Variety! Variety! is the big word for a popular Sunday evening service.

The theaters have learned this secret and they have found it successful.

Perhaps of all forms of theatrical amusement the vaudeville show is the surest, safest investment for an amusement man. It will pull when all else fails. That is because it has variety.

Variety in a church service is possible and will draw crowds in a rural church, in a small town, or in a big, supposedly indifferent city.

Variety is the magical key that will unlock the doors of all hearts.

Variety has a vitalizing effect; like a saline solution shot into the veins of a church.

In China I have seen a patient suffering with cholera, lifeless and inert, with no color in his skin, his eyes rolled back, no perceptible pulse; no breath showing on a mirror. Then I have seen the saline solution shot into his veins and in a few minutes color come back to the skin; the

eyes brighten up; and in an hour I have talked with that patient as he sat up in bed.

I have also seen the Salt Solution of Variety shot into the veins of a dead church; a church that had no perceptible pulse; a church whose eyes were rolled back so far in its head that it was looking into the dead past and was not conscious of the fact that there was a great city about its doors; and I have seen a scattered church attendance of fifty shoot up to 3,000 in two months' time. I have seen this happen three times.

It was just the matter of shooting the vigorous, vitalizing force of simple variety into an evening service.

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

Yes, "The Old Order Changeth," and if it hasn't changed it ought to. By that I do not mean any great sweeping figurative "order" such as the order of a great church, or even its fundamental tenants or customs. I mean the "Order of Service."

Why stick to some old, set, formal order of church service just because it has been set down by a lot of ancients from the dust choking past?

This change of the order does not necessarily mean that one suffers what may be called a "let down" in the dignity or sacredness of the serv-

ice. It does not mean that we have to introduce snowball gifts or a paper sack of flour, or cakes to everybody that comes. Only a man that is desperately uningenious has to resort to such subterfuges. One does not even have to resort to motion pictures. Variety of another sort I have found will work even in a big city.

MAKE IT A FEATURE SERVICE

Make things stand out in the minds of folks. If you have a service of the reception of members make it a feature. If you are baptizing babies make it a feature of your service. If you have special singing, make it a feature. If you have a choir, or a quartette, or a good soloist, advertise that fact and make folks in your city or town feel that the quartette, and that choir, that chorus, or that soloist, is about the finest thing of its kind in town. Give it a name. Call it the "St. Mark's Harmony" or "The Æolian Quartette" or whatever; just so you make it stand out as a regular feature of your services. Get the people to feeling that, when they go to your church services, there is going to be a series of "features"; that it isn't just one, big, long, single service; but that it is a "play within a play"; that it is a series of snappy, fascinating features.

To make this feature idea in variety stand out I often advertise the feature part of my service like this:

THE CHIMES

Request Programme 7 to 7:30—With Special Chime effects
in Morning

First Methodist Church

"The Church of the Cross, the Chimes and the Crowds"

A—Great Tenor, WILLIAM, of Knickerocker Quartette, will sing regularly at our morning service.

B—Special Chime Music

C—Odd Fellows Service in evening.

D—"How Men Die" sermon theme.

E—The Cross, the Chimes, the Crowd!

The church doors will be open at 6 Sunday evening in order to accommodate those who come early to get seats. There will be music from 6:45 to 7:30. The gallery of the church will be reserved for our special guests, the Odd Fellows. This is a special notice so those who desire may come early and get a seat down stairs.

Wm. L. Stidger-Frank McLain, Pastors

SOME OF THE REGULAR FEATURES FOUND USEFUL
FOR VARIETY

As I look through my files I find a group of special features that may be used in almost any church to add variety to the service. Tear up the old formal evening service if you want folks. Leave it as it is and break your heart preaching to empty pews. There are exceptions to this, but not many.

Some of the features I group under "Singing Features." The preliminary "Big Sing" leads off of course. Make it live! Make it throb! Make it human! Make it leap and bound with laughter and happiness! Keep it moving with variety! In another chapter I have discussed some of the ways that a "Big Sing" may be given variety and these ways are innumerable, including that most important item of giving your "Big Sing" a snappy name to begin with. We call our big sing "The Billy Sunday Sing." In another church I called it "The College Sing." That was in a College Town. I have heard it called "The Heart Warming Big Sing." The preacher was suggesting here that the preliminary singing got the hearts warmed up for the service and it was not a bad idea. "The Big Sing with the Whistling Chorus." The "Sing Song at Seven" was one name for it. Don't just call it "The Big

Sing." Get a new name for the sake of the vitalizing power of variety.

Then there are such features as throwing a spotlight on a picture of Christ. It may be only a big oil painting, or it may be a picture of Christ in an art window. Again it may be an Illuminated Window such as this writer has tried out successfully, and written about in this book. But the point is, that if you HAVE such a window and illuminate it, FEATURE IT! Make it a feature of your evening service. Make it stand out. Lighting a beautiful white cross inside of your church will not count big unless you FEATURE IT! Having a great speaker in your pulpit like Bryan, or Peter Clark Macfarlane or Eddie Guest the Poet, or Edwin Markham, or a great singer like Madame Ellen Beach Yaw will not bring to your services any extra folks unless you FEATURE IT! Preaching a great dramatic book sermon from Bojer's "The Power of a Lie" or from "The Great Hunger," or from "Les Miserables," or "Romola" or "The Scarlet Letter" will not draw big unless you FEATURE IT!

Shoot your service full of variety, but FEATURE the variety. Let folks know that it means something extra to you, and nine times out of ten it will mean something extra to them.

CHAPTER V

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH OF THE "POPULAR" SERVICE

THE day is past, if it really ever existed, when a preacher can stand aloof from folks and say within himself, 'If they want the gospel of Christ, it is here for them. If they don't want it, let 'em go hang,' " said a preacher friend to me recently; a man who, thank God, has solved the big and beautiful problem of how to get people and then of what to do with them when you get them.

"You believe, then, in Christ's idea that it's up to us to go 'Out into the highways and by-ways,' coax, beg, plead with, lure, enduce, urge, and entice them into the Kingdom?"

"Right you are, my boy. I believe that the preacher who sits down on his lazy haunches like a hibernating bear for the winter, 'settles down on his leas,' as the Book puts it; and waits for folks to come piling into his church and into the Kingdom, is a criminal in the eyes of a sacred opportunity and a tremendous need."

"Well put, my friend, and if anybody in America knows how to get them and what to do with

them; if anybody in America is big enough of soul to have a perfect passion for souls, and such a passion as makes him do almost anything, that fellow is you." I said to the big, kindly fellow who sat before my wood fire where we were discussing these problems peculiar to the holy task of fishing for folks.

"I'll do anything to get them. I'd stand on my head; I'd play dead-dog; I'd climb a pole, I'd dance a gig around my pulpit, I'd use pictures, I'd develop dramatics, I'd sing, I'd dive off of my pulpit into a sawdust ring——"

"But YOU don't have to do any of these freak stunts, old boy," I interposed.

"Then I can say with all the better grace that I *would* do them if I had to, which is equal to saying that the greatest crime a preacher can commit is that of not trying; trying strenuously and desperately to get folks; trying in every way that he knows how; trying one way, and if that fails, trying another; using pictures, if it is necessary—using anything that is necessary as long as it is honest and clean and fine."

"The fact that it has never been used and that it is unusual makes no difference to you?" I asked him.

"Not one whit of difference. The fact is that the newer the idea the better. 'Get them! Get them! Get them!' is my motto."

Then he continued: "It's what you do with

them after you get them that counts for eternity in their lives. If you haven't something spiritual for them when they come, all your efforts to get them are useless. But the method of getting them is not going to influence what you do with them when they come unless in your advertising you deceive them in some manner. That is unpardonable in either business or church publicity."

Since he is a man who is used to having a crowded church wherever and whenever he preaches, I listened to him with a great eagerness. He was as one "who speaks with authority."

"Do you think that having what is called a 'Popular' evening service is inclined to lessen the spiritual values of such a service?" I asked him.

"No. I have seen it do exactly the reverse. Some of the most spiritual services that I have ever held or attended have been the popular type, with an infinite variety in them, with the air of laughter, holy laughter; song, cheeriness, brightness, color, merriment. After all, folks are very close to the psychology of the spiritual when they are close to laughter."

And so, in my own church work I have gone on the general assumptions that to get an evening crowd in a modern American country church, town church or city church the preacher must make a distinct differentiation between his morn-

ing service and his evening service. He must make the evening service of the distinctly popular type.

I have tried that system out in three different types of churches and I have never had it to fail in one. I have tried it out in a country church, in a church in a city of 50,000 people and in a city of a million people, and I have found that it works miracles in either, or any type of church.

I have let it be understood from the beginning of my ministry that my morning service would be an "Old Fashioned Family Service" and I have stuck to the old ways of doing things in every detail that I knew. This is to make happy those older folks who have been brought up in the older day and generation. This is a service calculated to bridge the difference in the generations. One has no right to forget entirely the older church folks even in his eager desire to win the new generation to Christ.

But I have also always had it understood that the evening service was to be distinctly a service for those who were not in the church; a church service that would challenge those who went to theaters and picture shows and were not interested in the church at all.

CHURCH CHALLENGES THEATER

I have, in every city that I have ministered to,

issued this challenge to the theater : that we would draw a larger crowd, with the big, popular service; and that we could do that crowd of folks more good when they got there; send them home happier for having been there; and get them back easier and in larger numbers again than any theater in the city in which our church was located. I have frequently put into my ads. that challenging phrase which heads this paragraph: "The Church Challenges the Theater."

A prominent layman, in a recent editorial in the *Epworth Herald* of Chicago, referred to our challenge to the theater in these words:

"There's a preacher in Detroit, for instance, who is not discouraged by anything. As a matter of fact, there are many preachers of that sort in Detroit, though if any city in the country has a right and good excuse for taking an indigo bath this winter it is Detroit.

"This preacher that I have in mind is queer in a lot of ways. I don't hold with him in some things, but I heard the other day of one thing he said that made me feel good for at least an hour. I'm really not over it yet. Maybe he can't make good on what he said; I'm not arguing that he can. I don't know what he does on Sunday night; and I don't know what the theaters of Detroit do on Sunday night.

"But this is what he said: 'We dare any theater in Detroit to put on a Sunday night pro-

gramme that will be more interesting to the people of our community than the programme that we put on in this church!

"He may be mistaken, but he's no calamity howler!

"Sure enough an interesting programme is not everything! But isn't it pretty near the first thing? If your church is not interesting it is a poor imitator of the Master!"

For which editorial reference we are duly grateful at St. Mark's. We wish that the layman who was writing anonymously for the *Epworth Herald* could drop in on our service any Sunday night he chooses. The first thing he would notice would be an air of happy expectation. He would find our church filling up an hour and a half before time to begin. He would find folks laughing and happy as they crowded into the largest auditorium in Detroit. He would find the church full a half hour before time to begin and usually he would find chairs in behind the altar railing, in the aisles, in every available inch of space with forty or fifty people sitting on the pulpit platform. He would find six hundred extra chairs in use every night. So much for the crowds.

Second, he would find a programme of variety in music, art, color, motion, laughter, orchestra, features, and likely what the preacher calls "A Dramatic Book Sermon" preached. While he was listening to that sermon being preached he

would see a crowd of people listening to the old truths presented in a dramatic, human, happy way; and at the close he would, without fail, hear an invitation given to folks to come into the fellowship of Christ and that particular church. And more than that, he would find them coming. Sometimes he would find four or five responding to that invitation, and sometimes ten or fifteen; but always some. If he remained after that service he would find the Pastors at the altars of the church talking with people about their souls and their homes and their children for half an hour every morning and evening.

When he went away he would say to himself what all who come and see are willing to admit. "It is new, but it is the old, old story. It is a new way of preaching; that 'Dramatic Book Sermon,' but it is the old, old Gospel after all; presented in an impelling way; a way for to-day!"

I had this curiously proved a while ago. I happened to be behind the scenes visiting my friend, Ed. Wynn, one of America's most successful and cleanest showmen, a man who has done more to make the theater clean than any man now living.

While I was back of the scenes in his dressing room his manager came in to report the afternoon's "house."

"Full house, Mr. Wynn!" he said, with much satisfaction.

I was curious and asked what a full house meant in numbers.

"It means about 1,800 people," Mr. Wynn said.

At that very time we were running regularly more than 3,000 people in our church in a resident section of the same city; more than the theater boasted of that day when it had what it called a "Full House," and we were doing it with a big, popular, evening service, such as I have described elsewhere in this book, in its various details of light, color, dramatics, story and song.

I have had some curious reactions from this popular service in regards to its spiritual strength. Of course the first criticism that is flung at such a service when it gets the crowds is that "it is not spiritual."

But one evening a preacher, and a conservative Methodist at that, had visited my evening service with its singing of "Nellie Gray," its "Echo Singing," its "Billy Sunday Sing," its "Illuminated Cross at Prayer Time," its "Dramatic Book Sermon," and he said to me after the service was over: "I want you to know that I came to this service in an extremely critical mood. I had heard of your unusual services, of your overflow crowds, and I came expecting to find a vaudeville show here. But I want to say that you have introduced me to my Christ, anew, to-night!" And that old Methodist preacher wept as he said that at the altars of my church.

Another critic, a Presbyterian preacher, who was visiting our big popular evening service, said to me at its conclusion: "You have such a service here as has never been seen on the earth or in the skies, in the Heavens or in the paths of the seas, but you have not forgotten to 'speak a good word for Christ' and that is enough for me!"

A woman said: "We went to see David Warfield Saturday afternoon and were deeply stirred spiritually, but I want to say that this evening's dramatic book sermon on 'The Scarlet Letter' leaves me with a deeper spiritual stirring than the theater did."

A wife who had not been able to get her husband to church for twenty years said: "He comes regularly now to St. Mark's because of your popular evening service. He says that it is like a motion picture serial and that he doesn't like to miss a single episode."

In San José, California, a newspaper reporter friend was sitting in a vaudeville show one Sunday night. He heard a young couple sitting in front of him get up and say: "Oh, Gosh, this is too slow for me. Let's go over to the Methodist Church where there's something exciting going on!"

That was one of the finest tributes I ever had paid to the worth-whileness of the big, warm, friendly, popular evening service.

STEPS IN THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH OF THE SERVICE

It begins with the "Big Sing." The first song may be one of the old popular songs such as "Annie Laurie," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Nellie Gray," "Daddy," or even more modern popular songs. The people like to sing them. Often we have a soloist sing the verses and the crowd sings the chorus. They liked it in the theaters during the war and they like it in the churches in peace time. It wins their hearts. Then we gradually drift into the more sacred songs; from them into the hymns; and finally we never have a "Big Sing" that does not end up with some such group of the old church hymns as "Rock of Ages," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "Just as I Am," or "Abide with Me." And we find that the transition is not hard to make. It comes gradually and naturally. The folks like it and they miss it if the old hymns do not come. We do not even feel that we have done our full spiritual duty to our crowds if we stop with the so-called sacred evangelistic tent hymns.

And thus it is that we put the spiritual touch to even the "Big Sing." Then comes a beautiful transition again. It is from the "Big Sing" to the Prayer. We do it this way: The last hymn in the "Big Sing" is one of the old hymns of the church. The pastor tells a story about this hymn. As I have said in the chapter on "Mood Making

for Prayer," this Hymn Story marks a gentle transition from the "Big Sing" to the Prayer, with the last verse sung softly, and then prayer, followed by the singing of the last two lines of the hymn as a response.

If I am giving a Dramatic Book Sermon in which I act out the characters, dialogue and episodes of the book, I always do it with a spiritual purpose, as I have demonstrated in detail in the chapter on the "Book Sermons." It is always possible to turn the minds of your audience from these great emotional crises into spiritual channels.

Sam Jones used to say that "When they laugh they're mighty close to tears."

And I have found, too, that when their hearts have been warmed with laughter, with a "Big Sing," with an Illuminated Cross, with one of the old popular songs, with jokes at the collection period of the service, with a Dramatic Book Sermon, and with a general air of cheeriness, they are mighty close to the Kingdom of Christ and it is the usual thing for us to see at the altars of the church several men and women following each of our big, popular services.

One Saturday a bank in Detroit had been held up by six armed and masked bandits. The cashier, a quiet, fearless fellow, instead of surrendering to them when they stepped into his bank, ducked

down behind the counter and started to fire at them with his automatic, putting them to rout.

I always make it a point to refer to such publicly discussed matters in my sermon if it is possible with the theme in hand. In this case I was giving a book sermon on "Romola" of George Eliot. I said that Tito was a coward because he had sin in his heart; and that men were only fearless when they had Christ in their hearts. I told about the fearless cashier of the bank. After the sermon when I gave the invitation to the church, up came a quiet-looking, gray-haired man.

Along with many others he spoke to me. I did not know who he was, but he halted me with a query, "Don't you recognize me?"

I said, "No! I am sorry but I do not!"

"Didn't you see my picture in the paper yesterday?"

Then I recognized him. He was the cashier who had routed the armed bandits.

"I want to give my heart to Christ and come into the church," he said with deep feeling.

And so every Sunday night they come. Their hearts are prepared emotionally by the warmth and color and light and drama of the popular service and then when the preacher gives the invitation the spiritual fountains are opened and begin to flow.

CHAPTER VI

ECHO-SINGING

THE "Big Sing" is familiar to every preacher. The "Big Sing" is a child of the old singing school that was popular so long ago.

The "Big Sing" was revived in the theaters and in the camps during the war and became so popular that experts would get whole audiences of vaudeville folks singing their hearts out, singing old hymns and songs of the Sawdust Trails.

Most alert preachers have used the idea of the "Big Sing" to warm the hearts of the folks at the beginning of a big, popular Sunday evening hour.

The great Evangelists have started their meetings by using the "Big Sing." In a city where Billy Sunday once held a great revival, we have found it brought back old and beautiful memories to call our preliminary sing, "The Billy Sunday Sing." Old and pleasant memories are stirred anew by this very phrase.

"Why not capture these memories for Christ again and call our Sing 'The Billy Sunday Sing'?" I said to my Associate Pastor.

Its magic was just what I expected it would be, and hundreds poured into our church services just to take part in this big, friendly Sing. It was a heart-warming thing. It always will be when used rightly.

NEW METHODS IN THE "BIG SING"

The secret of conducting a successful "Big Sing" is to introduce new methods and new ideas into it from time to time. We have a "Big Sing" at St. Mark's Methodist Church, Detroit, in which from two to three thousand people take part every Sunday evening, and one of the new ideas that we have developed is what we call "Echo Singing." It was suggested by the thought of the Echo Organ. If an Echo Organ in a church, why not Echo Singing?

The Echo Singing is worked in this way. It is not a new idea but our new adaptation of the idea may be suggestive.

We station in some part of the great church one of our young lady soprano singers. The audience does not see her. She may be hidden, say, in the gallery. In another part of the church, downstairs an alto singer is hidden. In another part a bass, and in another a tenor.

Our leader announces a hymn. For illustration it may be "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior." He says to the audience, "I want the audience to



Photo by J. Wells Chilson

ST. MARK'S METHODIST CHURCH, DETROIT, HAS WASTED NO MONEY ON DOME OR TOWER. THE COST USUALLY APPLIED TO SUCH PURPOSE WAS PUT INTO A GYMNASIUM, A BOWLING ALLEY AND A ROOF GARDEN, MAKING IT A PRACTICAL, USABLE, INSTITUTIONAL PLANT FOR REAL CHURCH WORK.



Photos by J. Wells Chilson

AN OUTSIDE BULLETIN BOARD WITH A GLASS FRONT WHICH CAN BE OPENED AND LOCKED. IT IS MADE FOR A HAND LETTERED SIGN WHICH IS CHANGED WEEKLY.

THIS PERMANENT CHURCH SIGN IS LETTERED IN GOLD AND MOUNTED IN A COMPANION CASE ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE CHURCH ENTRANCE TO THE ONE EXHIBITING THE WEEKLY BULLETIN.



Photo by J. Wells Chilson

THE "FOOD" PART OF THE "FOOD, FAITH AND FUN" NIGHT.



Photo by J. Wells Chilson

THE "FAITH" PART OF THE "FOOD, FAITH AND FUN" NIGHT. ONE OF FOUR PRAYER MEETINGS GOING AT THE SAME TIME.



Photo by J. Wells Chilson

THE "FUN" PART OF THE "FOOD, FAITH AND FUN NIGHT."



Photo by J. Wells Chilson

"JUNIOR JOLLIES". A MASK PARTY FOR THE CHILDREN BRINGS NOT ONLY THE YOUNGSTERS BUT THEIR ELDERS TO THE CHURCH ON WEEK DAY NIGHTS.



A BOWLING ALLEY IS A GOOD ASSET TO ANY INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH—AND SHOULD BE IN USE FROM NOON EVERY DAY TO TEN O'CLOCK AT NIGHT.



THE KINDERGARTEN IS OFTEN A PART OF THE WELL EQUIPPED CHURCH THESE DAYS IN CITY OR TOWN. HUNDREDS OF MOTHERS DESIRE TO GO TO CHURCH AND THIS PROVISION MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO ATTEND.

sing on the choruses. I have arranged for the singing of the verses." The element of surprise and expectation enters in just here and in a second that great crowd is literally tense with expectation. They are figuratively "on their toes" with eagerness to see what is going to happen.

The organ plays the opening chords of that beautiful verse:

"Pass me not, O gentle Savior,
Hear my humble cry
While on others Thou art calling
Do not pass me by."

Then suddenly, far away, like some sweet elf in a woodland comes the alto voice on that plaintive prayer hymn. Sung beautifully it melts to tears and subdues the heart to reverence. Then as the last faint notes of that hidden soloist die away the great audience swings into the chorus as if the angels themselves were leading:

"Savior, Savior,
Hear my humble cry
While on others Thou art calling
Do not pass me by."

And it seems as if that chorus is the heart cry and prayer of every soul in the room. The Echo solo part tore down the barriers. Its sheer beauty and its dramatic presentation opened the

floodgates of emotion and the audience sang as it never sang before.

Each verse is sung in turn by the tenor, the soprano, and the bass. The effect is mysterious, reverent, magical, worshipful.

This idea is susceptible to innumerable twists and turns. Once I had Madame Ellen Beach Yaw, the great singer, hidden in a balcony of the church. I had a record of her most beautiful bird song on the phonograph. I had the phonograph played and then I had her sing as an Echo to her own voice. The effect was magical.

Another time we had our entire Harmony Quartette hidden in the basement of the church. They sang the verses of a hymn and the audience sang the chorus. It was a beautiful far-away touch, as if a band of Pilgrims was tramping across a desert singing as they came. With each verse the Quartette would come nearer and nearer to the auditorium producing the effect of a crescendo until on the last verse of the great hymn of triumph, "The Solid Rock," there was a sound like that of trumpets in the way the verse was sung:

"When He shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne!"

It was like some great triumphant processional in its music. It was as if the King in His glory had suddenly appeared in that church. The waves of response went through that great singing crowd like electrical currents. Throats were unloosed, lips opened, and hearts poured forth into song their deepest emotions.

One night we tried "Close to Thee," with the Echo effect. We had a duet of female voices this time. One was a deep and beautiful contralto and the other a soprano. We had the congregation sing the first verse:

"Thou, my everlasting portion,
More than friend or life to me,
All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior, let me walk with Thee."

Then came the chorus. It sings like this:

"Close to Thee, close to Thee,
Close to Thee, close to Thee;
All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior, let me walk with Thee!"

The contralto, hidden in the gallery, sang the first phrase, "Close to Thee," and the soprano, hidden downstairs, sang the second "Close to Thee" which comes to a beautiful crescendo. Then the contralto sang the third phrase "Close to Thee" and the soprano the fourth. Then the

two of them swung into that last beautiful, worshipful two lines:

“All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior, let me walk with Thee.”

Variety is the charming thing about a “Big Sing.” Folks soon get tired of the old schemes of getting the women to sing one verse and the men the second; as they get tired of anything that grows old. But the idea of the Echo Singing may be worked out in an infinite variety of ways and your singing crowd comes each Sunday evening, saying with laughter and expectations in its heart: “I wonder what new stunt in that Echo Singing business the preacher will have to-night. Say, that’s great stuff! I like that!”

CHAPTER VII

MAKING PRAYER MEMORABLE

THE secret of making the time of prayer in a church service stand out "like the silhouette of a lonely tree against a crimson sunset" is important.

The prayer time in the ordinary church service is a thing to be gotten through with. It is a mere form. It is hard, cold, mechanical, and automatic, like the little girl who prayed:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
Eeny, meeny, miney mo,
If he hollers let him go!"

Recently I heard a great English preacher say of Dr. J. Fort Newton that during the war while he was preaching in England his prayers stood out in such a marvelous way "that they became the full, complete, and fervent expression of the fears, hopes, sorrows, tragedies, and sufferings of a nation."

Dr. Newton's prayers, instead of his sermons, were often copied in full in the papers. It was

the remarkable case of a preacher making his prayers stand out.

In another way Dr. Tinsley, the famous colored Methodist preacher of Philadelphia, makes his prayers stand out. I heard one of them. It ran like this:

"O Lord, I ain't nothin' but an ignorant nigger! Down here in this audience is a pack o' Methodist Bishops, Editors and Professors! I ain't worthy to be preachin' to them! So, O Lord, you just preach through me. You use me for a telephone, Lord, and talk to 'em through me. Tell 'em what you want to tell 'em; preach to them; talk to them! And, O Lord, when you get through—hang up!!! Amen!"

In these two instances the prayers of two widely different preachers might be said to stand out. In the one case it was the chaste, stately language of an English minister and in the other the homely, effective, but far from dignified, although uniquely original, language of a negro, who in an entirely different way made his prayer stand out in one man's mind; and I doubt not, in the minds of all who heard him on that night, even above the memory of his sermon. I personally can remember nothing of the negro orator's sermon, although I have a hazy recollection that I was deeply moved by his eloquence. But that prayer stood out and it still stands out, a thing apart. It loomed over the rest of the service like a mountain peak.

THE LIGHTED CROSS AND THE PRAYER TIME

I believe that a preacher of the unsearchable, the illimitable, and the heart-warming Gospel of Jesus Christ has a right to use any legitimate way under God's sun, as long as it is dignified, and as long as it is reverent, of producing in the minds and hearts of the people who come to his church an atmosphere of reverence and worship. Most of us cannot make prayer stand out as did the London divine. Most of us do not care to do it as the negro did even if we could do it naturally and unaffectedly.

For that middle group, I think I have worked out an idea that is interesting, that is dignified, and that is productive of an atmosphere of reverence; and that, finally, is a simple thing to do that can be worked in any church, large or small.

I have always thought that the prayer time in the church service ought to be a most important part of the service. It ought not to be long and tedious, taking in every nation, official, and problem of humanity by name, swinging into the old formula that includes every man from the President of the United States down to the janitor of the church. Neither ought it to be quite so informal for mixed audiences as the prayer of the professor in Drew Theological Seminary who said absentmindedly in his prayer one morning at chapel, "O Lord, you ought

to have seen the New York *Sun* to-day!"

It is light that I mean, light on the cross! Not figurative light, but actual light. It works! Indeed it works with as much magic as the illuminated window of which I write later in these pages.

And here is the result of my problem of making the Prayer time in the church service stand out:

A simply constructed, beautiful white cross is made. Just a little secret between us preachers that mustn't get out; and that is, that the wire framework of the cross, which stands about three feet high, I got from an undertaker. But don't let that get out.

This wire framework of a cross which is stiff enough to stand on its own feet is wired with electric lights; and white, frosted, bulbs are put in, outlining the entire shape of the cross. The frosted glass makes a beautiful, snow-white light.

This white cross may be erected high in the church at some place. First we placed ours right in front of the pulpit. Then we tried it out back of the pulpit and lifted it up about six feet. We made the electrical connections from the pulpit light. But finally we lifted it up fifteen feet and placed it against the organ facing to the front and illuminated it from there.

And this is the wonderfully magical, worship-producing way that it affects the souls of a great audience of people. At prayer time, we turn all the lights of the church off gradually, just as they

do in the theaters. This causes an effect of twilight with darkness gradually approaching and produces an atmosphere of reverence. Then the choir sings softly "Hold, Thou, Thy Cross Before My Closing Eyes," or "When I Behold the Wondrous Cross," "I Am Coming to the Cross," "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," "At the Cross, At the Cross, Where I First Saw the Light," and a score of other songs and hymns of the Cross.

With all the other lights in the church off, and only the white form of the beautiful cross itself shining down on an audience, the choir singing softly, the congregation is in a subdued mood for the prayer that follows. Following the prayer, the choir sings a verse of some one of the many beautiful hymns on the Cross of Christ as a response. For a minute the Cross remains lighted and then, at a signal, the lights of the cross itself are switched off and the other lights in the church are switched back on, producing an effect like that of the dawning of a new day.

This creates an atmosphere of worship and reverence and it gets the hearts of the folks ready for the sermon in a way that no single thing that we have ever tried has done. And, after all, why should not we, the preachers of Christ, use His beautiful sacrificial cross as a very real part of our services as well as preach it in our sermons? Why should not we use color, light, motion, and music to produce the atmosphere of reverence?

CHAPTER VIII

MOOD MAKING FOR PRAYER

THE Palace of Prayer is our destination. But ordinarily we are not in the mood for prayer. The usual audience or congregation is not ready for prayer, especially after it has been singing in a big, boisterous half hour of laughter and fun.

"Then get them in the mood for prayer!" said a Bishop of the Methodist church in my hearing.

"But that is not so easy a matter as it sounds," said a third speaker.

Then came the idea of something to lead them gently up to the altars of prayer, following a big, popular type of an evening service.

The thought came that we preachers might take a cue from the architect who designed the Palace of Fine Arts at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. He built, as many will remember, a beautiful colonnade leading up to the entrance of the Fine Arts Palace.

"Why did you do that?" he was asked.

"I did it so that the souls of the people might

be subdued to the place where they could appreciate the beautiful paintings inside when they got to them. I knew that the people would be coming directly from the Palaces of Machinery, Education, Horticulture; that they would be coming directly from the Zone, from the crying of ice cream cones and peanuts; from the jangling and confusion of the great streets of the exposition and that they would be in no mood to appreciate fine art; so I made it necessary for them to walk through the beautiful colonnade before they got to the real entrance and the paintings.

“These beautiful old pillars; these ivied walls; these graceful marble statues; these fountains; the lagoon, with suggestions of Athens and Rome and Art and Music will get the people in the mood to see the more wonderful paintings and statuary inside.”

LET THE HYMN-STORY BE THE MOOD MAKER

So we, in our big, popular evening service, which is necessarily filled with much that is not prayer-producing, use the Hymn-Story to get the people into the mood for prayer; and we use it, in other words as a “Mood Maker for the Palace of Prayer.”

Just as the architect of the Palace of Fine Arts planned the beautiful colonnades to subdue the mood of the people to appreciate fine art, so we take them gradually out of the more popular

"Big Sing"; the excitement incident thereto; the noise and the incoming of people; the sound of the trombone and the cornet; and the laughter, into the spirit of prayer, by the use of the Hymn-Story.

The last song or hymn selected by the "Big Sing" leader in our service is such a hymn as "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "Abide With Me," "My Faith Looks Up to Thee," "Lead, Kindly Light," "Rock of Ages," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood," and such hymns. The Pastor, or whoever is to make the prayer, announces this as the Prayer Hymn.

He may say: "Now we have come to the end of our 'Big Sing' and we will want to select a different type for our Prayer Hymn. I have selected to-night 'Abide With Me.' The writing of this hymn had a strange setting and many thrilling incidents have centered around its singing all over the world."

Then he will tell the story of the writing of this great hymn. There are numerous books published that will give the preacher from ten to fifteen beautiful chapters of hymn stories that may be used in this unique fashion and that without much effort on his part. One that I am now using is "Famous Hymns of the World," by Allan Sutherland, published by the Stokes Company of New York. I have already used, during the past two months, just eight chapters of this book

in this way and it has proven to be one of the strongest drawing cards of a popular evening service that I try to fill with great variety.

Tell the Hymn-Story. Then let the congregation sing the hymn. But have your choir or your quartette or a soloist sing the last verse of that hymn softly. Then have it understood that immediately following the singing of this old hymn, the people bow in prayer. If one wishes, he may have the organ use the *Vox Humani* stops or a violinist play the refrain of the old hymn softly during the prayer.

What happens is, that in the telling of the story, and in the singing of the hymn itself, with the incidents of the hymn in mind and heart, a mood of prayer has been created unconsciously in the audience and then they appreciate not only the prayer, but they themselves pray.

Why should not we preachers, as well as the artists, apply the laws of subtle emotional and spiritual psychology to our church services?

Let the folks who have been in the busy, workaday and play world of the outside pass through the beautiful corridors and columns of an old Hymn-Story, and the singing of an old hymn and they will be in the mood to appreciate prayer when they reach the beautiful Palace of Prayer.

This is an idea that will work in any church, city or country, large or small, pipe organ or piano, and it will produce results.

In addition to having this extreme value of producing in an audience the mood of prayer this Hymn-Story, which should only take about five minutes, will add a feature to the generous evening's popular programme; a feature that will be worth advertising as "The Hymn-Story" and a feature that will produce spiritual results.

CHAPTER IX

PUTTING THE PUNCH IN PUBLICITY

WHAT is your idea of two or three fundamental laws for church publicity?" I asked a certain Bruce Barton, son of a preacher and expert publicist, one day when I was having lunch with him in New York City.

"First, that you advertise your Christ and your Church and your Gospel and not yourself. Second, that you deliver the goods when you get the people. That is also a fundamental law of publicity in the business world."

"What do you consider the fundamental law of church publicity?" I asked the pioneer authority on such matters in the church world.

And he said like unto the expert advertising man in the business world: that you must advertise your church and not yourself; and that you must deliver the goods, with the additional statement: "The quickest way to kill a breakfast food, soap, or any product that is no good is to advertise it. So it is with a church service or a preacher. The quickest way to kill a church service is to advertise it for something that it actually is not, and

get a big crowd there. They'll never come back again!"

There are several focuses that may be used to set the world on fire with publicity in church work. Perhaps the first one that may be suggested is the:

SEASONAL FOCUS:

People unconsciously think in terms of seasons. Their minds are continuously on the seasons and the weather. Stores, theaters and other concerns keep their eyes on the seasonal focus and the weather thinking. Why not the church? It is New Year's. Why not use the idea in your advertising? Then comes hot weather. Why not make your church cool and then use that focus to interest people?

I suggest some such ad. as that on the opposite page.

The same suggestions may be made in the winter time of a church that is as "Warm as Toast" and the church that is "Well Ventilated," the church that is "Always cleaner, better ventilated, and more sanitary than any theater." However commonplace these things may seem to the reader the fact still remains that the average human being does a lot of thinking about the weather, and this seasonal focus and weather focus is a strong one.

THE "COOL AS A CAVE" CHURCH WELCOMES YOU SUNDAY

FEATURE PROGRAMME

A.

Illustrated Preliminary Sermon
(Ten Minutes)

"YOSEMITE—GOD'S DREAM COME TRUE"

B.

Sermon in The Morning

"THE COOLING RIVERS OF THE BIBLE"

C.

Sermon in The Evening

**"THE SNOW-CAPPED MOUNTAIN
OF THE BOOK"**

D.

THE ARGALL QUARTETTE

Dressed in white ducks will sing

Big, bright, cheerful, hopeful services
that you will enjoy.

Church Challenges Theater

(We aim to make our Sunday evening programme as interesting as any theatre in the city; and we challenge your attention to it to-morrow night.)

First Methodist Church

Fifth and Santa Clara Sts

"The Revolving Cross Church"

The Way You Went to the Tabernacle

:-----Sunday Features-----:

A—At 7:30 the Popular "BIG SING," C. M. Dennis, Leader. ,

B—BIG SPECIAL MUSICAL CONCERT—COLLEGE OF PACIFIC FACULTY—AUGMENTED CHOIR. Violin, Harp, Pipe Organ, Soprano, Schubert, Gonoud, Matthews, Drdla. This Concert is Given the Last Sunday in Every Month.

C—STORY SERMON, EDWIN MARKHAM'S, "CONRAD. THE COBBLER."

D—ILLUMINATION OF RESURRECTION WINDOW," With Harp Accompaniment—Hidden. Lights Off.

The crowd started to come last Sunday at 5:30, although the sermon did not begin until 7:30. At least a hundred were turned away because they could not get seats. SEATS ARE FREE AS LONG AS THEY LAST.

THE FIGHT FOCUS:

Everybody loves a battle. Everybody likes to hear the ring of a challenge. The battle between the Theater and the Church is an age-old battle. The battle between right and wrong is age-old. The same psychology used to apply to newspapers. The old-time editor used to start a fight with his rival paper to boost his circulation and the people would buy the paper just to see what the editors were saying about each other. I have never gone to a city that I have not used in some form or another the ad. on page 88.

THE FOCUS OF EXPECTATION:

If the preacher doesn't expect great things from his ads., nine times out of ten great things will not come. If he is so sure of his service that he expects a crowded church, let him slip some such suggestion into his ads. now and then. It breeds suggestion in the reader's mind.

I illustrate my thought by the last phrase in the ad. which I have just quoted:

"THE CROWD STARTED TO COME LAST SUNDAY AT 5:30, ALTHOUGH THE SERMON DID NOT BEGIN UNTIL 7:30."

Or may I suggest some such phrase as this:

"WE PROMISE NO SEATS AFTER SEVEN O'CLOCK."

Or perhaps:

"OUR BEST SEATS ARE GONE BY SEVEN O'CLOCK."

Or:

"LAST SUNDAY WE HAD TO PUT IN 600 EXTRA CHAIRS!"

Or:

"THIS CHURCH IS EXPECTING AN OVERFLOW CROWD SUNDAY NIGHT."

These suggestive lines may be placed at the bottom of a display ad. with powerful effect. They must be used carefully, and only when you have every right to expect a big crowd.

THE FOCUS OF LIGHT, COLOR, MOTION, GOSSIP,
SINGING, MUSIC, AND MORE ESPECIALLY
THE HARP:

In the following ad. I have focused on several instinctive human interests. There is no human being who does not love the Harp as a musical instrument. When it is played in a church with the old hymns it is especially beautiful. So I start the ad. off with that one word linked up to another, suggesting mystery:

"THE HIDDEN HARP"

HIDDEN HARP!

GREAT HARPIST WILL ACCOMPANY

Illuminated Window

Sunday Night at First Methodist

THE WAY YOU WENT TO THE TABERNACLE

"The Revolving Cross Church"

What Folks Said Last Sunday:

"It's better than the theatre. I went to a theatre last Sunday. I'll come here regularly."

"I don't see how you manage to cram so much into one service."

"I'm sick to heart to think of what I have missed by not coming here regularly."

"I never saw such a crowd in any church before."

"As big as the crowd that heard Johnson speak."

"That illumination is the most dramatic thing I ever saw. The theatres have nothing on that!"

"I'd rather come here than go to a 'movie' any time."

"That preacher took me the fastest joy ride I ever had in my life. I had to hang on to keep up with him!"

"As long as you have that beautiful window illuminated it will bring me here!"

FEATURES TONIGHT:

(We mean to compete with Sunday night-theatres and give as interesting an evening, worth more, cleaner, and you'll go home feeling better than you've been here.)

A—Big Monthly Musical by College of Pacific Faculty. Violin Solo. Augmented Choir.

B—Short Story Sermon, "Markham's 'Conrad the Cobbler.'"

C—Illuminated Window, with Hidden Harp Accompaniment.

D—The First Church "Big Sing."

Then I follow it up with a focus on the natural human interest in light and color suggested by:

“THE ILLUMINATED WINDOW”

and

“THE REVOLVING CROSS CHURCH”

Another phrase of psychological suggestion that I have used in this ad. is that of:

“THE WAY YOU WENT TO THE TABERNACLE”

My church in San José, California, happened to be close to the grounds where the big Biederwolf meetings had just been held and these meetings had gotten the people into the church-going habit. In fact, such meetings always do. The “Billy Sunday” meetings did this for Detroit as I can testify. I have never seen such a church-going city as Detroit and I attribute it to this interesting fact. So I used the psychology of suggestion in this instance to get them to thinking in the direction of my church.

THE FOCUS OF GOSSIP:

Some types of church gossip are good. The good things that people say about a church are

good. So from time to time I set down in my ads. what people are saying about my church services. It gets people to thinking success in connection with the church:

“WHAT FOLKS SAID LAST SUNDAY”

In the next ad. I will illustrate what I mean by the psychology of gossip. Everybody enjoys good, friendly gossip. Focus on that human interest in your church ads.

THE FOCUS OF MUSICAL INTEREST:

No soul lives that does not respond to music of some sort. The following ad. has several musical appeals. It has the “Harp” appeal. It has the “Big Sing” appeal. It has the “Violin” appeal. It has the “College Glee Club” appeal. Music will always find a quick response in the hearts of the readers of church ads. Even the theaters found this out in war time and instituted the “Big Sing” to please their patrons. In peace time they always see to it that they have several musical features.

THE GROUP FOCUS:

A preacher may most successfully make an appeal to what I call the Group Psychology. Every

MASONS!

YOUR NIGHT AT

First Methodist Church

MASONIC SONG

MASONIC SERMON

MASONIC SERVICE

ALL LODGE MEN INVITED!

Preliminary Organ Recital by Miss Shafer Beginning at 7.

Doors open as usual at 6; seats reserved for Masons.

Wm. L. Stidger—Frank McLain—Pastors.

**GIRLS! THIS NIGHT FOR
YOU ESPECIALLY!
STORY SERMON "JOAN OF ARC"**

A stirring, dramatic, spiritual story of a visit to the
place of Vision in France, where Jeanne d'Arc was born.

**FIRST METHODIST
CHURCH**

Fifth and Santa Clara

**JUNIOR CHURCH GIRL
CHOIR WILL SING**

Morning Sermon

"He Sees Beyond the Skyline"

year I have a Masonic Night and the first word that I use in my ad. that week in big display type is:

“MASONS!”

That word will immediately focus on the ad. the attention of all of that group which I wish to reach.

If I am having a special programme for college girls, working girls, High School girls or Home girls, I shoot the word at them like this:

“GIRLS!”

There is a double focus here for it not only interests the girls themselves but it interests every boy and man in the city who sees the ad. The theaters have long since used this psychology of the human male interest in “girls,” only they have usually used it in a way that suggests the lower instincts rather than the higher and the uplift instincts. Why should not the church and the preacher use that natural human interest psychology of “Girls” if he is actually going to have a service for girls to catch the eye of folks to his church ads? It always works.

I illustrate this thought of appealing to certain groups with several ads. which I myself have already found to be strong appeals.

THE PROFESSIONAL FOCUS:

In addition to this "Group Focus" one may effectively use the "Professional Focus" with fine results. I try always if I have anything in my sermons that will be of interest to Teachers, Lawyers, Doctors, Prizefighters, Safe Crackers, Businessmen, Policemen, etc., to let that fact get a prominent place in my ad., and I have had some fascinating results.

At one time when I preached on the story of Saul Kane in "The Everlasting Mercy," by John Masefield, I had a gang of ringmen in my church. They were greatly impressed with the conversion of the prizefighter. Another time after I had been arrested for speeding, I announced that I would, in my Preliminary Sermon of five minutes, tell what I thought of the Traffic Squad of my city. I had six of the Traffic Squad present and that marked the beginning of a warm friendship with the head of this squad in a great western city and resulted in having him for a regular attendant. The Professional focus is strong!

The following ads. will illustrate this ideal.

THE RACIAL FOCUS:

In this cosmopolitan country of ours we are always interested in the race question. We have

“Rex OF Wrecks”

Sunday Night Sermon, First Methodist.

**FOLLOW THE CROSS TO FIFTH
AND SANTA CLARA**

The Way You Went to the Tabernacle.

THE STORY OF:

A LAWYER

A DOCTOR

A PREACHER

AN OPERA SINGER

A GIRL

**Are the Lawyers, the Doctors, the Preachers, the
Girls of San Jose Safe?**

THAT BIG SING!

You will want a part in it.

**Rev. Wm. L. Stidger,
Pastor.**

Prize Fighters, Barkeepers

INVITED

SUNDAY EVENING

First Methodist Church

“The Story of a Barkeep and Prize-Fighter”

Charlie Golf, Ex-Jim Corbett Sparring Partner,
Now Traffic Squad Head of San Francisco,
Says “That Sermon Is as Good as the
Best Drama I Ever Saw.”

Founded on John Maesfield’s

“The Everlasting Mercy”

FREEMAN!

America's Great Scotch Preacher

**"The Ian MacLaren of the Pulpit" — Pastor Largest
Presbyterian Church in America—**

First Methodist Church Sunday

**INTERNATIONAL NIGHT! Japanese Girl Soprano, Han-
nah Shimizumi**

Scotch Preacher

**Scandinavian Violinist and Pianist — Mr. and Mrs.
Skavena**

Hawaiian, Korean-Chinese-Philippino on Programme

**Doors Open at 6—NO SEATS RESERVED. Organ Recital at 7:00
Service at 7:30.**

Wm. L. Stidger-Frank McLain, pastors

RUSSIA!

"The Bear That Walks
Like a Man"

Dramatic Story Sunday Night
Sermon

First Methodist Church

EARNEST POOLE'S

"The Village"

BY THE PASTOR

90 per cent foreign-born population in most of our great eastern cities; we have the negro problem all over America, and the Japanese problem in the west. The whole country is interested and its attention may be caught with the Racial Focus in advertising. Once a year I have what I call an

“INTERNATIONAL NIGHT”

and on that night I try to get on my platform a member of every race living in the city where I am preaching. Then I have a Chinese boy read the scriptures, a Japanese boy pray, a Korean boy sing, an Italian boy sing, a Russian boy do something, and if possible, a Scotch preacher.

The first illustration that I include here is the one illustrating the “International Night,” the second, one that grabs at the popular interest in “Russia.” This second ad. focuses twice as do many ads. First it focuses in its general racial interest, and second, it appeals because of the highly intensified interest in Russia these days:

THE MAGDALEN FOCUS:

There is always an interest in the fallen woman by both men and women. Why not use this human interest for good? The beautiful story of Jesus and the adulteress is one of the strongest

stories in the New Testament and it has more appeal to the average human being than any story in His life. I have never known this focus to fail in bringing overflow crowds. I illustrate what I mean by the use of the following ad. which will, at the same time, illustrate what I call the "Book Interest Focus."

Everybody is interested in certain books. The newspapers review them, the people are reading them and talking about them. Why not cash in on this free publicity for the Kingdom of God?

THE NEWS INTEREST FOCUS:

What are the people talking about this week? Find out, and, if possible, make your sermon on Sunday evening focus this interest. Is it the Russian question? Is it the Bolshevik problem? Is it the labor troubles? Is it a strike going on? Is the Influenza rampant in your town? Focus that public interest.

FOCUS OF PUBLIC MEN:

Use the ad. value of an already well-advertised man or thing. Everybody knows certain public men and institutions. I illustrate: Everybody knows Irving Cobb. *The Saturday Evening Post*, his own stories, and James Montgomery Flagg have made him famous.

"THE SCARLET LETTER"

BIG

Sunday Evening Story Sermon

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

Fifth and Santa Clara

FOLLOW THE LIGHT OF THE REVOLVING CROSS, THE WAY YOU WENT TO THE
TABERNACLE

The Illumination

WILL BE ACCOMPANIED TOMORROW WITH A BEAUTIFUL SOLO, ON THE
FINEST PIPE ORGAN IN THE CITY WITH ESPECIAL USE OF THE VOX HU-
MANA STOP.

The Big Sing

"Glad Day" will ring out as usual until it gladdens your heart. Have you ever heard them sing "Glad Day" at the First Methodist Church in the "Big Sing?" Well a woman said last Sunday "It's worth coming here just to hear that song!"

Well the whole evening is just one big "Glad Day" Service, and you'll go home happy. Many were turned away last Sunday evening just because there was not room enough in the big auditorium, that seats a thousand, and in the big Sunday School room, galleries and all. We're sorry. Come early and get a good position to see the Illumination.

Wm. L. Stidger, Frank McLain, Pastors

Fear Kills More Folks Than the Flu

Will be the sermon theme Sunday Night of the
Rev. Wm. L. Stidger at the

First Methodist Church
FIFTH AND SANTA CLARA

"Hand to Mouth Disease"

and not

"Crowd Disease"

"Is the mask any good at all?"

"What good does closing theatres and churches do?"

"Is it with us to stay or will it stop in summer time?"

"What are the best methods of prevention?"

"Are old folks liable and children immune?"

"Is Dobel solution prevention or not?"

Hear These Questions Answered by Science.

Big, Popular, Cheerful, Helpful Service, with Good
Music, in a Well Ventilated, Clean, Warm Auditorium.

"Follow the Light of the Revolving Cross."

1

IRVIN S. COBB

A Day With Him in France

Preliminary Talk at

The First Methodist Church

Fifth and Santa Clara.

This is the first of a series of such talks which will be given before the evening service on his personal impressions of Peter Clarke Macfarlane, Margaret Deland, Charles Dana Gibson, Franklin P. Adams, "F. P. A." of the New York Conning Tower, Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Edwin Markham.

2

DUET BY WILLIAMS CHILDREN

These sweet voiced child singers will melt your hearts. Hear them. They seem to have inherited their father's talent.

3

MORNING SERMON—"THE FIERCER FAMINE"

4

Big, popular, happy, full of music and singing, short sermon on popular and helpful themes, is our EVENING SERVICE. Ask the crowds why?

5

OUTSIDE ILLUMINATION OF CHRIST WINDOWS'

and Preliminary Organ Recital, as usual.

"The Church with the Cross, the Chimes and the Crowds."

Wm. L. Stidger—George Colliver
Pastors.

**Blood-Stained Flag
Crosses Continent
TO ATTEND
Big Patriotic Day
AT**

THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

**Old Soldiers in the
Morning
Boy Scouts in Evening**

A big, sane, sincere, Patriotic Day Service—morning and evening in this church. "The Old Flag Never Touched the Ground." Red flower for each soldier. Special music. New song. Seats reserved for soldiers and Scouts.

Wm. L. Stidger—Frank McLain, Pastors.

THE SPECIAL DAY FOCUS:

Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Armistice Day, Lincoln's Birthday, April Fool Day, Washington's Birthday, Christmas, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and a score of other special days give a chance for what I call the "Special Day Focus" of advertising. The people are thinking about these special days. I illustrate what I mean with a single ad. pertaining to Memorial Day.

CHAPTER X

SOUL-SAVING SLOGANS FOR CHURCHES

IT Floats," "Have You a Little Fairy in Your Home?" "There's a Reason," "Hasn't Scratched Yet," "Won Its Favor Through Its Flavor," "Eventually—Why Not Now?" are a few slogans of the commercial world that flash across the screen of one's memory as quickly as a motion picture shot.

"Why do they come so easily and quickly?"

No! It is really not because I concern myself greatly with buying the soap for my own home. My wife does that. Nor do I purchase the Grape Nuts. She does that also. The Bon Ami? No, I let her buy that also. The Flour? No. I'm very liberal, and I believe in trusting the women folks, so I let my wife do the buying for the kitchen. I am not like a preacher friend, who swells up with pride like a poisoned puppy when his wife, in his presence, tells a woman friend about his distinguished dishwashing in this phrase: "John can wash dishes just as well as I can!" Poor old John! He is being worked by

the most primitive of woman's guiles; flattery; and he doesn't know it.

But in spite of the fact that my wife does the household buying, I know those advertising slogans of the commercial world as well as I know my alphabet. I know them so well that in starting off this chapter I did not even have to refer to the pages of a magazine. I found that my memory produced them with alert readiness. They shot into my mind as quickly as the keys of my typewriter could write them down. Constant repetition, constant flashings of those slogans on the retina of my eye and the screen of my mind for years has made them a part of my mental storehouse. And I am just an average magazine reader.

Then why not use this same psychology for the church and the coming of the Kingdom of Christ among men?

There are several types of slogans for churches which I want to segregate in this chapter: Slogans of Service, Slogans of Suggestion, Slogans of Situation, and Spiritual Slogans.

SLOGANS OF SERVICE

The slogan that suggests service to a man or to a community will catch the eye and, better still, will catch the heart. The spirit of Christ, who dressed in the garments of a slave and

washed the feet of His disciples, has captured the heart of the world. Even the business world is now Christian to this extent: that it has learned the great truth that real business must be built on service.

At the time of the writing of this book I happen to be the pastor of St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church in Detroit, Michigan. I find here a slogan of service in use that captures my imagination and that has, in a strange way, captured the hearts of this great community of 150,000 souls in which the church is set down. That slogan stands out like Halley's comet in the skies:

“SERVE THE CHURCH THAT LIVES TO SERVE.”

There is, in that phrase, not only a suggestion that the church is set down in its location to serve but that the folks ought also to return that service. It is retroactive. It “Gets 'em both coming and going.” It suggests devotion to the church. It is the most perfectly balanced “Slogan of Service” that I have ever seen in print.

I found it printed in red letters across the outside of the envelopes of the church so that its flaming message caught every eye. Even the mailman said one morning to me: “I was at your church last night.”

“What brought you so far?” for I knew that he lived on the far side of the city.

“That red sentence on all of your stationery.

That sounds good to me and I keep seein' it, and seein' it, all the time on every piece of mail that I handle from your church, 'Serve the Church that Lives to Serve.' Boy! that's some mouthful!"

"The Church of the Strangers" suggests service to strangers; and a welcome. "The *Big* Church with the *Big* Heart and the *Big* Crowds" suggests a desire to help. "The Little Church with the Big Heart." "The Church of Lofty Friendship" is a "Slogan of Service" that I picked up in China from a young Chinese Christian preacher, who was educated in America and who carried back to China this slogan suggestion that he found in America. He has that beautiful phrase translated into Chinese and uses it on all of his stationery and has a sign up outside his church building with those magical words painted:

"THE CHURCH OF LOFTY FRIENDSHIP"

It would not be a bad phrase for some of our American Churches to use. "The Church that Gives you the Glad Hand" is another "Slogan of Service" that makes you picture a warm welcome when you enter its doors.

SLOGANS OF SUGGESTION

A Detroit preacher said to an advertising friend of mine: "Doctor, that ad. you had in

the *News* Saturday evening had a punch in it that was like the punch of a broken-nosed prize-fighter. It had a snap like a whip!"

Being curious to know what phrase the young preacher referred to, my friend said: "What particular phrase do you mean?"

The answer came with characteristic swiftness: "I mean that slogan phrase that you used as your last sentence, 'WE PROMISE NO SEATS AFTER SEVEN O'CLOCK.' "

That slogan suggests what I mean in this paragraph. It has suggestion of an overcrowded church in it. It breeds interest. It has a pull and a tug to it that makes the reader want to go to the kind of a church that has such assurance of crowds that it adds a phrase like that to its advertising. It suggests that if one wants a seat in such a church it would be wise for him to get there early. It literally drips with the suggestion of a crowded church.

This same preacher often uses this suggestive phrase: "MANY FOLKS ARE COMING AT SEVEN O'CLOCK TO GET SEATS FOR THE SEVEN-THIRTY SERVICE."

"But shouldn't you be mighty careful about using a suggestive phrase of that calibre unless you DO expect a crowd?" said a mutual preacher friend.

"Most assuredly!" I replied. "It ought not to be used at any time unless you are morally certain

to have an overflow. Such a phrase ought to be reserved for the big occasions. If it is used carefully it never fails to capture the imagination of people."

"The Church That Turns Them Away," "The Church That Is Bulging Out Its Walls," "Watch Us Grow!" "Everything But the Aisles Full and the Fire Laws Prevent That," are all suggestive of crowds, and it cannot be denied that the average person likes to go to a church where there are crowds. Much of the success of the big "Billy Sunday" type of meetings is due to the crowd psychology and the suggestion of crowds that the newspaper stories give the people.

"White-Sunday Night" is a slogan of suggestion that suggests a man. A few preachers like this type of publicity. I do not. I maintain that the fundamental basis of true publicity in the Christian Church is to advertise the church, and not the man.

"The Home-Like Church" is a phrase of suggestion which warms the heart of the lonely and will win his attendance nine times out of ten. In fact, I watched a phrase of this type work in San Francisco; and hundreds of people came in, won by its suggestive power. "I was a stranger in the city; and lonely; and that phrase sounded good," one man said. "I had no place to go and it was Christmas time and I was thinking about

home, and your church slogan caught at my heartstrings," said a business girl.

"Never a Stranger But Once in This Church" has a warm, friendly suggestion about it that attracts folks.

"Warm Your Hearts at the Hearth Fire of St. Mark's Methodist" is a slogan of suggestion that wins.

"The Cheery, Cordial, Comfortable Church" is full of suggestive power. You can feel warmth radiating out of that suggestive slogan.

"The Church with the *Cross*, the *Chimes* and the *Crowds*" is a phrase of suggestion that we used at First Church, San José. It told in three words of three distinctive features of that great church at that particular time: it told of the beautiful revolving cross, it told of the beautiful organ chimes, and it told of the crowds. It suggested light, music, folks.

"The *Big* Church with the *Big* Heart and the *Big* Crowds" is full of powerful suggestion in three ways.

"This church is comfortable and cool; and cordial with courtesy," is a "Slogan of Suggestion" that I take from Dr. Christian Reisner's book on "Church Publicity."

"As Cool as a Cave" is a slogan that we used to use in San José, California, in the summer time. Of course, I saw to it that the church was cool and comfortable when it was hot outside.

SLOGANS OF SITUATION

Many churches find it helpful to play on their particular geographical location to win friends. Perhaps the most famous phrase of situation is that of "The Little Church Around the Corner" in New York City. This Slogan of Situation has found its way into the heart of all America.

"The Little Church on the Hill," a phrase that won its way into the heart of a city, was a phrase that this writer used to designate the location of Calvary Methodist Church in San Francisco. It was set up on a hill overlooking the Golden Gate. This "Slogan of Situation" rapidly stole into the hearts of people until it came to mean but one church; and that was Calvary.

"Ninety-eight Steps from Broadway" is a slogan of situation that is being used by Union Methodist Church in New York City at this time.

"The Only Church on Market Street" is a phrase that this writer coined for Trinity Methodist Church, San Francisco, which still sticks and is useful after eight years of wear.

"At the Center of the City" is used by the First Methodist Church of Syracuse, New York, according to Dr. Reisner. It is a "Slogan of Situation" that does not focus as well as it ought. If the phrase somehow had the exact location by streets in it, it would be more useful.

“The Church With the Flashing Cross” and “The Church With the First Revolving Cross” and “The Church With the Big Cross” are phrases of situation that will win, for the stranger will look up that “Church With the Flashing Cross” when he is hunting for a church Sunday night.

SLOGANS SPIRITUAL

The most powerful slogans that a church can use are the spiritually suggestive slogans. Among these are the Biblical slogans. I like to see a man who advertises use his paid space in a paper to do something besides tell about his service. I like to see him preach in his advertising. It wins hearts!

“GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT——” was a Spiritual Slogan which I saw used effectively in a church ad. in Baltimore. It was not necessary to finish that quotation. Everybody knows that wonderful verse. In truth the very fact that it was incomplete gave it the power of suggestion.

“LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED!” is a Spiritual Slogan that one preacher uses on all of his stationery and all of his advertising. It wins hearts!

“WE SING TO SAVE” is a Spiritual Slogan that I have used in advertising the “Big Sing” with which we begin our popular evening service

at St. Mark's. It sets the tune for the service. It names the text. It suggests the end in view of the whole evening and I find that people are not afraid to go to a church, no matter how popular the service may be, if that church is on the job saving souls for Eternity. They like the thought!

"YOU NEED GOD! GOD NEEDS YOU!" is a phrase that I like to use on my Bulletin Board so that every day it preaches to the folks who pass by. It is a phrase that catches both the eye and the heart! It is a Spiritual Slogan worth using.

"But, after all," said Mr. Goodnow, Editor of the Church Page of the *Detroit News*, one of the finest church pages published in America, "if you don't deliver the goods when you get the people there, all the slogans and phrases you can coin will not hold them!"

"What do you mean by delivering the goods?" I asked this expert, curious to know what an old, hardened newspaper man meant when he said that thing about a church and a preacher.

"If you don't feed 'em; feed 'em spiritually, I mean!" was his answer, delivered with emphasis.

Then he gave a vivid illustration of how a certain English Evangelist who had taken the name of a truly great Evangelist, that of his father, and had come to Detroit. The newspapers gave him such boosts and write-ups that the first few nights his auditorium was crowded with people.

In fact, it was necessary to turn hundreds away. But from that time on, the crowds gradually began to fall off. It was a case of big advertising killing a poor product. "It always will in business circles or church circles," said the Church Editor.

And added: "For back of all slogans, whether they are as you suggest, Slogans of Service, Slogans of Suggestion, Slogans of Situation, or Spiritual Slogans, there must lie the spiritual pulse-beat of a great church soul; the heart and dynamo of spiritual power. These are the only forces that, in the long run, will keep folks coming permanently. So the Spiritual Slogans are the most important of all."

CHAPTER XI

IDEAS IN ILLUMINATION

LIGHT, color, motion, stories—and the greatest of these is LIGHT!

David Belasco has made his theatrical reputation on the use of lighting effects.

Those brethren who have made bold to attend a good theater now and then have been thrilled by the beautiful illusions that have been created by lighting effects. I have personally spent many a thrilling hour behind the scenes with one or two of my actor friends, and I have been more thrilled by the methods of producing lighting effects than I have by the great crowds of chorus girls, shifting of heavy scenery, and other unusual things that go on behind the scenes.

"What was the most striking thing you saw behind the scenes?" a reporter asked me after one of my adventures of this sort.

"The way they made an old paper tree look like a fresh spring shower of blossoms in the Santa Clara Valley, by the use of a few colored lights," I replied.

If the average theater-goer could see the mar-

velous corps of electricians who work behind the scenes to make color effects for their delight they would feel that that was more interesting than the show.

These lighting effects impress an audience instantly and deeply. For instance, one of the most impressive things I ever saw on a stage was the opening scene in "The Dawn of a To-morrow," when the curtain rolled up on a dark stage, with only a dim light showing here and there through a London fog; with voices speaking in that fog.

Lights off in a theater and beautiful colors on the stage always have a magical effect on an audience.

"Then why not use these same lighting effects for the Lord?" a preacher friend said to me. And that set me thinking.

The first time I ever saw anything like this tried out was in Altoona, Pa., years ago when an enterprising preacher threw a spotlight on a Hoffman Christ picture that he had in one of his beautiful colored windows. The effect was magical. The idea captured the town over night. His church was crowded with people just to see that beautiful illumination. Men talked about it on the streets, for I was a complete stranger in the city and I heard about it from a man in a barber shop one Saturday morning. The next day I went to that church because I did hear about it.

It was a very simple thing. It did not require

much work to arrange an ordinary spotlight. That light called attention, anew, to the beautiful Hoffman Christ head. It was spiritual in its results. It brought the crowds. It captured the hearts of the people who came.

THE ILLUMINATED BILLBOARDS

Out in San Francisco we tried out an illuminated billboard. It was near a little church out on the sand dunes. Right next to the church was a billboard. At Christmas time and Easter time the Billboard Association of America had donated both space and pictures for beautiful scenes from the life of Christ. I persuaded one of the billboard companies of San Francisco to put one of these pictures, that of the birth of Jesus, on the billboard next to my little church. Then I hired an electrician to run a wire out to the billboard and flash a light down on the face of the little child, Jesus, as He lay in the manger. It was a beautiful effect and hundreds of people at nights would stop to look at this illuminated billboard. Automobilists would stop their machines, struck by this unusual focusing of a spot of light at Christmas time on the Christ child, out on a common city billboard. The illumination of an ordinary church bulletin will increase its effectiveness fifty per cent, for more people will be attracted to reading it by night than by day, because

of the unusualness of the illumination. I feel that much of the real advertising value of the ordinary church outside bulletin is lost if it is not illuminated in some way. The theaters do not fail to realize the importance of keeping their great signs flashing by night.

THE ILLUMINATED CROSS

I shall devote an entire chapter to the Revolving Electrical Cross, but desire at this point to call attention to two or three types of illuminated crosses that I have found effective in church work. One is the flashing cross. This is a stable cross erected on the top of a church steeple with rows of lights on both sides that flash intermittently first one and then the other. It is a striking idea and Wesley Methodist Church, Detroit, Mich., has one of these crosses that does very effective work every night, not only in attracting attention to the church, but also in preaching the story of the Cross every time it flashes.

The second type of Illuminated Cross that I have found effective is that of the permanent cross, with its white light streaming out constantly all night long. There is such a permanent cross on a great Catholic Church at the foot of Chinatown, in San Francisco, that has come to be an institution of that great and romantic city. This cross has for years been shining down over

Chinatown, which section is full of Oriental wickedness; and down over the famous red-light section, known as the Barbary Coast; and down over the harbor of that city. It has had a mysterious and silent influence on thousands of people. It is seen from the bay and is one of the first lights visible as you cross the bay on the ferries from Oakland or Berkeley. Shining out amidst the commercial lights it proclaims the fact that the people of the Christian Church are not forgetting their task in a world of sin. I have never seen a more strategically situated, illuminated cross than this one in San Francisco. Nearly every city in America has a permanent cross on some one or two of its churches. This was the first idea to develop in illuminated crosses, the second being the Illuminated Revolving Cross, of which the author of this book happens to be the inventor.

A combination of an illuminated American flag, a large clock, and a beautiful cross, which is situated on the Forty-eighth Street Union Methodist Church in New York City, the Pastor of which is the Rev. John Benson, is perhaps the largest illuminated sign in the world.

But the uses of an illuminated cross are not confined to the outside of a church entirely. One of the most effective uses of an illuminated cross that I have ever seen is that of its use at prayer time inside a great auditorium. I have described

this in the chapter on making prayer stand out, but will refer to it here in this chapter on Ideas of Illumination. A great beautiful white cross is made and erected in front of the church altars and auditorium. It will be of white and therefore will be an ornament at any time, even though it is not in use. Sometime during the night service, every light in the church may be turned off. Then the lighted cross is switched on. It has a marvelous effect.

It may be used at prayer time to make prayer more sacred, or it may be used at the close of the service as a benediction on the service as the people go home. It may be used at the very beginning of the service, to set an atmosphere. The theaters find this lighting effect worth while.

It may be used in connection with beautiful music. I have used the general idea in connection with softly played Violin Solos, Vox Humani organ music, muted Cornet solos, and Hymns sung softly. One of the most beautiful things I ever saw and heard in a church was last Christmas when my Associate Pastor, Mr. O. R. Grat-tan, arranged for one of our musicians to be hidden in the wings of the church, with his cornet muted. The great crowd had gathered for the Christmas service. A beautiful star had been substituted for the cross. Suddenly the lights in the great auditorium went off at a given signal. Then far up in the top of the church a lighted

cross was flashed on. You could hear people gasp all over the church with the beauty of it. It was enough to take your breath away. Then the sweet, but muted tones of the cornet in "Silent Night! Holy Night!" stole sweetly out "Like the horns of Elfland faintly blowing." It melted the hearts of three thousand people in such a way as I have seldom seen them melted. It gripped their souls. It made the whole story of the birth of Christ more real. They could feel, as the Shepherds watching their sheep by night on the plains of Judea felt, when they first saw the star. It created the most beautiful and most spiritual atmosphere I have ever seen in a church at Christmas time. The Illuminated Star can be constructed simply and cheaply by an electrician. It is only a mass of wires arranged in the shape of a star.

One night I had a crowd of Shriners in my church. One of the most beautiful scenes in one of the Shriner degrees is that of the Crucifixion of Jesus. That night we had the Illuminated Cross lighted at prayer time instead of the Illuminated Star.

We sang "In the Cross of Christ I Glory." A thirty-second degree Mason told me that during the illumination of the Cross and the Prayer a business man sat beside him with the tears running over his cheeks at the sheer beauty and worshipful atmosphere which was produced by that

Illuminated Cross in the church. He said: "It is the most marvelously beautiful thing I ever saw in a church service!"

This Illuminated Cross inside of the church for use at the opening of the church service, for use at the Prayer Time, as a transition from the "Big Sing" atmosphere to the prayer mood, for use as a benediction in connection with music, is simple of construction and ought not to cost at most more than ten dollars. It can be erected in any church, large or small, where the church has electrical current, and I doubt not could be used with phosphorescence in any church whether they have electrical effects or not in their churches. I have never tried out the method of using this inside illuminated cross with phosphorus like the Ingersoll watches, but I doubt not that it would work. It was suggested to me by Mr. Goodnow, Church Editor of the *Detroit News*.

In the next chapter I shall discuss in detail the idea of the Illuminated Windows that have had remarkable effects on people.

CHAPTER XII

ILLUMINATED WINDOWS

THE idea had been growing in my mind for a long time.

In front of the great auditorium of First Methodist Church, San José, was a great twenty-foot Resurrection Window. I had noticed that when the morning light streamed through it, during the morning service, it was a thing of glory and beauty.

"But it is dead at night; dead as the tomb that it depicts!" said my janitor.

"Yes, it is as dead as the tomb all right!" I added.

Not a ray of light streamed through it. In fact, it was so dead, that great dull, opaque space of glass, that it was hideously ugly. It was an eyesore to me night after night.

"Why not do artificially, for that window, from the outside of the church, what the sun does for it in the morning, shining in through its beautiful colors?" something said to me one morning, as I sat in my pulpit watching the beautiful morning light pouring through the stained glass.

"A good idea!" I answered. It captured my imagination. I could hardly wait for Monday to come. I spent the day with an electrician. I told him my idea. He said: "It is fine! I can do it!"

"What will it cost?" I asked him.

"Not more than twenty-five dollars, at the most. I will simply run wires out back of your church, put reflectors in back of the various high points of your art window, and then pour several floods of light through.

"Make the tomb with the white angels standing over its empty space stand out!" I requested.

"Yes, and those beautiful crimsons there where the three crosses loom against the sunset sky in the upper left corner of the picture," he added.

"And the faces of the three mystified women!" I said in conclusion.

That was enough. The idea had captured his imagination as it had mine, and as it was destined to capture the imagination of the whole city, the newspapers, strangers visiting there, and everybody who heard of it.

In three days he had the work done. We rehearsed it. It was beautiful beyond all of my hopes. It was awe-inspiring. It was worship-producing. It was a use of light and color and the Resurrection story that was unique. It would make the window stand out in the hearts of the people as it had never stood out before. It would tell the story of the Resurrection over and over

again, night after night, instead of just once a year. It would preach. It would inspire as well as beautify.

And just here I want to call the attention of the reader to the fact that not a single one of these suggestions of illumination that I have made, or that I shall make further along in this book, but has its end in worship. The first 'flush of the valuation of these new ideas is that they will capture the imagination of the people; but the underlying motive of these ideas and of all the ideas in this book are spiritual. The Illuminated Star, the Illuminated Cross, both inside and outside of the church; the Illuminated Windows; even the Illuminated Billboards, not only capture the people, but they also preach to the people while they are capturing them.

So the Illuminated Resurrection Window not only attracts people to the church, but it also preaches to them. It not only awes them with its sheer beauty every time they look at it, but it subdues their souls with the old and triumphant story of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This Resurrection Window has been in use for four years and it still seems as new as the first night that it was tried out. People going to San José, and thousands of tourists from all over the world do go, always visit the "Church with the Illuminated Window."

The first night that we used this window we

inserted the following ad. in the papers and the church was crowded beyond its capacity to seat the people (see opposite page).

WINDOWS'ILLUMINATED FROM THE INSIDE OUT

But this is not the end of the idea for Illuminated Windows. This great western church also had eight other beautiful windows. But there was no way of illuminating them from the outside of the church into the interior. They were at the backs of the audience. Then came the Influenza shut-down which lasted for six weeks.

The church was closed. It was dead. It was cold. It was not preaching, and that, at a time when people needed the church more than they had ever needed the church before.

Then came the second idea of using our beautiful eight-foot art windows to preach through even if we couldn't open the church. So I got an electrician again. We went through the empty church which echoed with our footfalls. We estimated and measured and finally he said: "I can illuminate every one of these beautiful windows from the inside out; pouring the light from the inside to the outside, for about \$100."

I mention these prices to show that these ideas are not prohibitive because of the expense in reproducing them.

In a week the work was done.

Then one Saturday night we advertised in the

ILLUMINATION!!!
Big Resurrection
Window
SUNDAY NIGHT
First Methodist
Church

CORNER FIFTH AND SANTA CLARA

Follow the Light of the Revolving Cross

The town will be talking about this beautiful 20 foot window and its illumination.
Be there for the first time tomorrow night.

All lights will be turned off in the big church during illumination.

WM. L. STIDGER, FRANK McLAIN, Pastors.

papers that in spite of the fact that our church doors were closed and the preacher could not preach, that the First Methodist Church would preach through its beautiful Illuminated Windows. We announced that, beginning at the usual time for church services, the lights would be turned on for the first time and the eight beautiful windows would be illuminated from the inside of the church to shine out over the streets. We invited people to come to this strange preaching service.

That night the streets were crowded. We were the only church in the city that was preaching to folks during the "Flu" shut-down and we were doing it in a reverent way without endangering lives, for they were all outside in the fresh air. It was a curious sight to see thousands of people standing on the streets with their masks on looking at those beautiful windows, with hundreds of automobiles driving up also.

The windows told the story of Christ's life, beginning with the dedication of the Infant Jesus, and then going on through the story of His life to the beautiful Hoffman Gethsemane picture, and the Ascension. The Hoffman picture was the most beautiful of all, because it was in reds and browns. The cloak of Jesus was a beautiful crimson and the light pouring through this crimson, with Jesus kneeling beside the rock and the thorns nearby, made a most striking effect out on the

streets. Night after night now, for three years, these windows have been preaching to thousands of people whom the pastor of the church can never reach with his voice. The windows, with their shining lights and their story of the Christ, preach to everybody, to every automobile party that flies by that church, and these are many, for the church is on a direct line from San Francisco to Los Angeles. It was not long before this church, under the advertising influence of these Illuminated Windows, came to be known as "The Church with the Illuminated Windows," and strangers always sought it out for the night service just because it bespoke progress and uniqueness of ideas. We used to use a sign in our bulletin like this:

"THESE UNIQUE IDEAS OUTSIDE OUR CHURCH
INDICATE THAT THERE ARE IDEAS INSIDE!"

There are few churches in America where this idea of Illuminated Windows cannot be successfully carried out, for there are few churches, even in rural communities, where there is not at least one stained glass window. This one window can be illuminated either from the outside in, or from the inside out, to be used either as a feature of the service inside the church or to preach to those outside the church and to be used as a striking advertising feature, an advertising feature that at the same time has distinctive spiritual values.

CHAPTER XIII

THE REVOLVING CROSS

WE have been discussing in some detail the general drawing and preaching power of ideas of illumination, and we now come to the most distinctive drawing and preaching idea in illumination that I have yet found in the laboratory of practical experience, and that is the Revolving Cross.

The idea of the Revolving Electric Cross was born out of a great need. I have told about it many times and I have clippings that indicate that stories have been written about the Revolving Cross in more than three hundred separate papers, some of them technical magazines, some of them fiction magazines, but most of them church papers.

In a travelogue story in *Harper's Magazine* a story of the First Revolving Cross appeared some time ago, when a young lady who was writing a story told of sailing out of San Francisco Bay through the Golden Gate bound for South America, when the last two things that she saw were the Old Dutch Windmill of the Golden Gate Park

and the little Revolving Electric Cross on Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church.

Every scientific magazine in America has used a story and a picture of the Revolving Cross.

It came, as I have said, out of a great need. I had been sent to a little Methodist Church in the sand dunes of San Francisco. It had neither congregation nor membership. The church building had been built as an experiment. The experiment was to see whether or not, if the Church Extension Society of our church would build a beautiful church, a congregation and membership could not easily be gathered together. When I arrived on the scene all that I had for a morning congregation was the janitor and a sand storm. My church was short of folks, but it was full of sand.

"Indeed, sand is just what you need to tackle a job like this," the janitor grinningly informed me, as I complained about the sand on the floor.

And I found out that I did need sand and lots of it.

For six months I preached to an average congregation of six. I was getting discouraged and desperate. I knew what was the matter all right. I had long since figured that out.

It was not that they were not getting good preaching, for I had invited the Bishop out and no more came to hear him than came to hear the regular preacher. It was not that the church was

not beautiful, for it was the most beautiful type of English architecture I have ever seen in a small church.

It was simply that the people of the district did not know that the church was there. The people were there all right. But they had never been conscious of the fact that this new church was there. True enough they had watched it being erected. But that doesn't mean that they knew it was there. The laws of human psychology will permit a man to pass a certain building on his way to work every day for years, and he will not actually know that the building is there.

So I realized that we literally had to shake that district awake. We had to startle it into knowing that the church was there. I first thought of a flash light. Then I thought of a permanent cross. But the flash light was too old and the permanent cross was too tame. Then one Sunday afternoon the thought came to me: "Why not a cross that turns around, revolves?"

I had never heard of such a cross. All the better, then. It will be a new idea.

Electricians were called in. They handed me blueprints. The idea was on paper. It had leaped from my brain to that of the electricians and from their brain to paper.

In a month it had leaped from paper to the top of my little church's tower.

And in another week it had leaped from the top

of that tower into the consciousness of the whole city district and from the night the revolving cross was dedicated to the end of my ministry in that church, we had all the people the church would hold. The Revolving Cross had shaken the district awake to a consciousness of the presence of the little church.

This ad. crowded the little church a half hour before time for the evening service. That was the first service in six months that there had been more than six people at a single service. There were three hundred there that night. A single collection that night paid the entire expenses of installing this new cross. From that night on, we never lacked for a crowd. It was merely a matter of focusing the attention of that community on our little church. It was the task of shaking them awake to its actual physical presence in their midst.

Thousands of letters from all over the world asking about the cross came in the first year's mail. Churches all over America began to install them. The British Consul of Melbourne, Australia, wrote asking about it. Letters came from far-off China. Churches in America began to erect them.

The First Methodist Church, Los Angeles, the pastor of which was Dr. C. E. Locke, later elected Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, had one placed on his church tower which shines out

**DO NOT BE STARTLED!
AT THE LIGHT
IN THE SKY
SUNDAY!**

**IT IS NOT A COMET!
IT IS NOT A SHOOTING STAR!
IT IS NOT AN AIRPLANE!**

**IT IS THE FIRST REVOLVING CROSS
EVER ERECTED ON A CHURCH
IN THE WORLD!**

**IT IS
ON CALVARY METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Judah and 19th**

**You are invited to the dedication of this cross
by "The Church with First Revolving Cross"
Wm. L. Stidger, Pastor**

over the great downtown city square of Los Angeles, preaching to thousands of people every night. Dr. Locke always had a church crowded to its limits.

The First Methodist Church of Pasadena, California, immediately erected one of these revolving crosses on their beautiful and conservative church. The First Methodist Church of Long Beach, California, soon erected a revolving cross and it shone out across the Pacific until it came to be the beacon light for fishermen coming in by night. It guided them in.

First Church, San José, California, the Pastor of which at that time was Dr. George A. Miller, erected a revolving cross and dedicated it at that most appropriate time, the Easter night service. Morgan Memorial, of Boston, has had a Revolving Cross for three years. There are three revolving crosses in San Francisco alone, one of which was erected on California Street Church, one on Bethany and the original one on Calvary.

The idea has spread from the Pacific Coast to the Atlantic with crosses on churches in practically every large city on the Pacific Coast and in Brooklyn, Boston, and New York on the Atlantic coast with several in between across the continent, one being on St. Mark's Methodist Church in the city of Detroit, Michigan.

Growing out of the idea of the Revolving Cross on Epworth Church, San Francisco, there has

recently been erected a beautiful lighted star that shines out over a thickly settled portion of that great western city.

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE IDEA

The parts of the revolving cross are four: an eighth of a horse-power motor; a hollow iron shaft, a set of gears and the cross itself.

The cross itself is made of sheet iron, enameled white, with concave surfaces and in the shape of a cross, with electric lights buried in it.

This sheet iron cross is clamped on a hollow iron pipe. This hollow iron pipe is connected with a simple set of gears. These gears turn the hollow iron pipe around twice a minute and this takes the cross with it. The eighth of a horse-power electric motor does the work. It only costs about \$300 to erect a revolving cross on any church steeple, and the cost of maintaining it never runs more than a dollar a month all told. The first cross that was erected, six years ago is still running, and its average cost of maintenance has only been a dollar a month. It runs without attention, save that of oiling the motor now and then. It can be turned on and off from the regular switchboard. Blueprints, or the entire equipment itself, are sold by the Sign Company to which I have given the rights of manufacture. This company is the Brumfield Elec-

tric Company of Seventh Street, San Francisco, California.

The purpose of this book is to be of practical help to preachers and it is for that reason that I include the name of this manufacturing firm. They have built and erected and sent out more than fifty crosses and I have yet to find a single complaint about the cross. On the other hand every preacher that has one on his church is a great enthusiast over the whole idea.

THE SPIRITUAL VALUE OF THE CROSS THAT REVOLVES

A woman in a hospital at San José, California, said, "I do not know how I could have stood the strain of the first night following my major operation if I could not have looked out of the hospital window and watched the Revolving Cross flash into view every minute. That sight saved my life for it reminded me of how much greater pain Jesus suffered for us than I was suffering for my home."

In San Francisco I was called to see a poor woman out across the Sand Dunes who was dying with tuberculosis. She said, "Every evening I make my husband carry me in to the front window where I can look out across the dunes and watch the Revolving Cross on the little church flash into view every minute. That has been the

way I have worshiped for months. I could not get to church. The Revolving Cross has been such a comfort to me!"

"Nobody ever associates anything mean and low with the form of the cross. You never heard of its being used by a saloon or a questionable business. It suggests but one thing and that is the death of Jesus. It could not even by the vilest man be made to suggest anything but good; therefore every time that cross flashes out across a city in the night it preaches Jesus Christ and Him crucified to men," said a preacher who had one of my crosses on his steeple.

"People sit in the great city park and watch the Revolving Cross for hours every night that it is lighted!" said Dr. Locke in the testimony of its preaching value in a great city like Los Angeles. "It reaches people who never come inside of my church and people who could not get inside. It preaches to them when I cannot. Its message is always spiritual!"

"Thousands of people who speed through this town on Sunday nights from all day automobile trips; who have not been in a church all day see the cross flashing out across the night and are preached to, whether or not they want to be. In spite of themselves that cross suggests Jesus Christ and Calvary's cross!" said Dr. George A. Miller, Pastor of First Church, San José, when

he had erected one of these crosses on his church steeple.

The Revolving Cross not only has tremendous power as an advertising feature of church work, with its combination of light and motion against the night; but it also has a tremendous spiritual value, in that it always suggests Christ and Calvary and good. The Cross has never, since Jesus made its form eternally sacred, been used for anything but good things. It never suggests anything but good!

A poet recently interpreted the Revolving Cross in these lines, dedicating them to the University Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington; a church which has one of these crosses:

Brighter than tropic stars it burns,
Far shining as it slowly turns,
Now hidden from me in the night
Only to flame again more bright.

Now east, now west, now north, now south,
Farther than if by word of mouth,
It sends the word of Gospel cheer—
That through the darkness God is near.

Now east, now west, now south, now north,
The flaming message goeth forth,
To tell the world that hither lies
A pathway unto brighter skies.

When doubts and fears like storm waves toss,
I look for guidance to the cross.
Lord, may its light a beacon be
To lead my erring soul to Thee.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FINE ART OF TRIPLING THE LOOSE COLLECTIONS

THE Fine Art of doubling, or tripling, or as I have seen it in some cases, that of quadrupling the loose collections, is the fine art of doubling and tripling the audience. And the fine art of doing this thing is the fine art of good publicity.

With the Feature Services: the big, happy, helpful, hopeful, popular evening service, this can be done. The chapters of this book dealing specifically with church methods that will work will show at the same time that they pay fully and entirely for themselves in a financial way.

The first reason why a pastor, or a group of pastors, a church or an official board, does progressive church work, is to save souls. The secondary object is to get a crowd and fill the church with the atmosphere of success. The third reason is to make it pay financially. Usually a board is tempted to consider the whole matter from the last viewpoint. That is quite human. That is the viewpoint from which we are consider-

ing it in this chapter. The other reasons are considered elsewhere in this book. This chapter is frankly and avowedly set down as a proof that the right methods in publicity; the popular evening service; the use of plenty of money, carefully spent in publicity, actually pays in dollars and cents, and will always pay, and never fails to pay. I cannot put that strongly enough!

The first place that I ever saw this thing actually happen was when we erected the first revolving cross on the little church in San Francisco. The night that the cross was erected enough money was handed to the pastor to pay for every cent that its manufacture and erection cost.

The idea had captured the hearts of the people. So the cross not only got crowds, but it actually paid for itself in one night. It not only did that, but enough money has come in from the erection of this cross to pay for the erection of three other crosses; one of which is in far away China.

At First Church, San José, the author of this book had the pleasure of starting the first campaign of advertising that had ever been systematically carried out in that great church.

At my first official board meeting I faced the manager of a large corporation. He is a manufacturer of tractors. I faced another man who was the President of the Normal School of twelve hundred students; and another who was the



AN ILLUSTRATION OF HOW A GREAT ART THEME MAY BE USED TO ADVERTISE A CHURCH SERVICE. THIS CUT APPEARED WITH THE CAPTION: "FOLLOW THE PROCESSION TO-DAY TO THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH." HUNDREDS OF CUTS OF THIS CLASS MAY BE USED TO BRIGHTEN AN AD.



PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE PICKED UP ANYWHERE THAT CAN LATER BE USED IN A CHURCH AD. TO GIVE COLOR AND TONE TO THE APPEAL.

IN THIS CASE I WAS PREACHING ON THE THEME: "THE BELLS OF MAUREPAS"



THIS PIECE OF SCULPTURE MAKES A GOOD CUT FOR A LABOR DAY CHURCH SERVICE.



Photo by J. Wells Chilson

THE ILLUMINATED CROSS INSIDE THE CHURCH FOR USE AT PRAYER TIME WITH ALL THE OTHER LIGHTS IN THE CHURCH TURNED OFF OR FOR USE AS A NEW KIND OF A BENEDICTION—WITH LIGHTS OFF AND MUSIC.

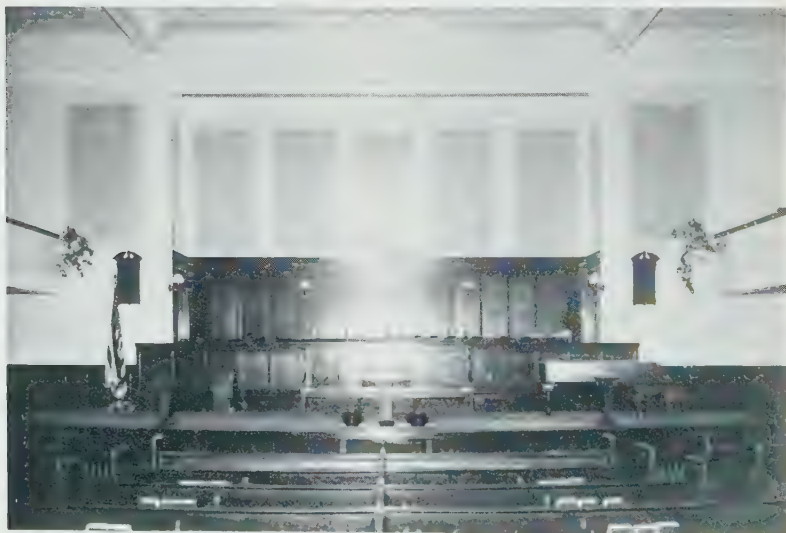


Photo by J. Wells Chilson

DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON THE LIGHTED ELECTRIC STAR IS USED INSTEAD OF THE CROSS AT THE PRAYER TIME, IN ST. MARK'S, DETROIT.



Photo by J. Wells Chilton

A NIGHT PICTURE OF ST. MARK'S METHODIST CHURCH, DETROIT, MICHIGAN, THE PASTORS OF WHICH ARE THE REV. WILLIAM L. STIDGER, THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK AND THE REV. O. R. GRATTAN. THE FIRST REVOLVING CROSS EVER ERECTED IN THE CITY OF DETROIT. IT CAN BE SEEN FOR MILES ALONG THE HIGHWAY.



CALVARY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SAN FRANCISCO, ON WHICH WAS ERECTED THE FIRST REVOLVING CROSS IN THE WORLD DURING THE PASTORATE OF THE INVENTOR, THE REV. WILLIAM L. STIDGER.



THE ILLUMINATED WINDOW AT FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, SAN JOSÉ, DESCRIBED IN THE CHAPTER ON ILLUMINATED WINDOWS.



THE CHURCH SHOULD ALWAYS BE MADE BEAUTIFUL WITH FLOWERS.



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE ILLUMINATED WINDOW OF FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, SAN JOSÉ.

President of the Board of Trustees of that School; several lawyers, several surgeons, the Principal of the High School, a representative of the Labor Unions, and about twenty-five, bright-eyed, keen business men.

But they had never had an "Advertising Preacher" and church publicity was new to them, save in spasmodic doses.

My first request was for \$5.00 a week for newspaper display advertising. The conservative members of the board courteously halted. They wanted to be nice to me, but this was something new. They were perfectly accustomed to an advertising budget in their business institutions but not in the church. I saw this and made an offer to them.

"All right!" I said. "I'll promise from the first Sunday of the advertising campaign, not only to pay for the cost of the advertising out of the extra loose collections that come in, but I'll double your loose collections in addition to that!"

"That is a fair bargain!" said the head of the corporation.

I did as I had promised and even better.

The first Sunday after our newspaper campaign the five dollars invested was brought back, and \$68 in addition. The usual loose collections had been averaging about \$25 a Sunday.

From that time on, the church was never big enough to hold the people, and the loose collections

began to jump up until they were three times what they had ever been in the history of the church, and in addition to that, they were paying for the ads. every week. The second month I asked for \$10 a month for publicity, and the third month for \$15, and the fourth month for \$25 a month, and each investment paid for itself and increased the loose collections of the church in proportion. This was due to the fact that the crowds were getting greater and greater all the time; a result of the advertising and the big popular services.

"But does the big increase in loose collections interfere with your regular income?" I am always asked at this juncture.

"Yes, it does! It always increases that regular income. It increases the envelope collections, because from every great crowd we always get new members for the church roll."

"Do you have the Every-Member-Canvas in your church?"

"Indeed I do, and believe in it with all my preacher soul and body!"

"And this loose collection business is made up of money thrown in by the additional crowd attracted by your ads?"

"It is, and I have tested it over and over," I replied.

My second great test of the fact that advertising pays, in dollars and cents, was in Detroit,

Michigan. I knew that it had worked in a small suburban church in San Francisco; I had made it work in a small city church where all told there were available only about fifty thousand people to draw from; but now I have tested it in a big indifferent American City of a million souls.

When I first took the pastorate of St. Mark's Methodist Church in the city of Detroit, the evening service was running an average attendance of about two hundred people.

It was a new church. The evening service had been grievously neglected. We put on a campaign of publicity, using larger space in the Detroit papers than any church in the city. Some of my board members were a bit nervous over this matter, for they were none too flush with money.

"I'll double your crowds; I'll pay for every cent that I spend in advertising; and I'll double your loose collections in a week's time!" I promised them.

The results were beyond my most optimistic dreams and hopes. The response was immediate and overwhelming. A church that had been built so large that the Bishop who built it had been accused of building a "White Elephant" for Methodism was too small for the crowds within a month. We began to turn people away within a month. The congregations jumped from 200 to 2,000 and then to 3,000. We put in 600 extra chairs every Sunday, after filling every available

inch in the largest auditorium in Detroit. It was like a "Billy Sunday" crowd; so said the people of Detroit.

But the increase in attendance from 200 to 3,000 was not the only results of the advertising campaign. The loose collections were not only doubled but they were tripled, and finally they got to running ten times as much as they had ever been before.

The first month I invested about \$85 in advertising, and as a result of that investment, I brought into the church in loose collections close to one thousand dollars.

Here is the approximate chart of increases of loose collections that will tell better than words the tale of how well good advertising pays:

October 3rd.....	\$53.15
October 10th.....	104.85
October 17th.....	135.17
October 24th.....	144.37
October 31st.....	171.09
November 7th.....	190.60
November 14th.....	199.10
November 21st.....	230.15
November 28th.....	297.09
December 5th.....	305.16
December 12th.....	320.00
December 19th.....	360.80
December 26th.....	410.80

These figures tell the story of a steady increase due to a careful campaign of advertising. The first month about \$100 was invested in the advertising, the second month about \$150, and the third month \$200 a month with the returns that are easy to compute, until at last the loose collections were running and are running, as this chapter is written, eight times as much as they were without the investment of the advertising money.

I believe that this can be done anywhere, in any church, in city, village, rural community or anywhere. I believe that it will actually work as well, if not better, in a small town than a large city because it would be so unusual that it would attract more attention in a small town. I believe that it is infallible. I know that it pays. I have tried it out in three different types of churches.

The fact, however, as I have heretofore said, that it pays for itself, in such handsome financial returns, is not the end. I am asked many questions about this campaign. I shall answer them here for they will be occurring also to the mind of the earnest reader of the book.

First: "Do you get folks into the church and the Kingdom?"

Answer: "At San José I took in 325 people the first year, which was more than had been taken in, according to the records in any single

pastorate of the church, some pastorates of which ran for five years."

Second Question: "But was the taking them in merely a nominal joining of the church?"

Answer: "Every person that came, whether he came by transfer of a letter or by Confession of Faith, knelt at the altars of the church. It meant something definite in their spiritual lives. I saw men converted continually under this campaign."

Third Question: "Did this increase in attendance continue?"

Answer: "It continued as long as the advertising campaign continued. Ivory Soap would drop off in sales to-morrow if the advertising campaign stopped. This has been proven in the mercantile world. The same holds true in the church world. But there is no use to discontinue. I make my advertising contracts for the year. At San José we had the motto, 'No Let Down At First Church in the Summer Months,' and as a result we ran crowded churches in Summer as well as Winter."

Fourth Question: "Does this loose collection income hurt your regular income or take the place of it?"

Answer: "It does not hurt it in the slightest. Rather it helps it. It does not take the place of either the regular Benevolent Income or the Current Expense Income. All during this time men-

tioned in the St. Mark's Church experience we were at the same time taking Benevolent collections, one of \$200, one of \$300, and at the same time our regular envelope collections were increasing and our Building Fund collected close to \$50,000 in addition to having these big loose collections. They did not hurt a single regular fund of the church."

Fifth Question: "Did your spiritual results keep up in the Detroit Church as well as in the smaller church?"

Answer: "During the first three months of the Detroit campaign we took folks into the church at the rate of fifty a month and expect to continue doing that to the end of the year."

Careful advertising pays in dollars, in attendance, and in getting folks into the Kingdom.

CHAPTER XV

SELLING THE CHURCH GATES TO THE JUNKMAN

THERE has been a feeling for a long time that churches are not useful institutions.

"They're open on Sundays and closed all week," said a drummer to me in that great American open forum, a smoking car on a Transcontinental train.

"And usually they have a few spiked-top, iron bars and gates up all the week except Sunday; to further emphasize the fact that people are not wanted week-days!" added another critical fellow passenger.

"Dark all week! A lazy lot are these Parsons!" a big, florid, red-nosed man, with a sombrero hat, said.

I let them talk for about an hour. I wanted to get at the heart of their legitimate criticisms of the church. I didn't want to pass up such an opportunity of getting their honest opinions of the clergy and the church. The worst they had said about the clergy was that it was lazy. The worst they said about the church was that it was

not using its building. Once a week was not enough they were sure.

Then I told them who I was. It was interesting to see how they immediately began to try to make excuses for the church. Each fellow hunted me up privately before the end of the trip to San Francisco to apologize to the church. They were afraid they had hurt my feelings. They wanted to explain things away for the church.

But I am of the opinion that real live churches and honestly alert preachers do not want things explained away for the church. If the church is not open every day in the week; if it is not being made useful to the community from which it receives concessions in paying no taxes; it has no moral or ethical right to occupy a strategic corner in any city or village.

The church ought to be a community center. It ought to be made useful to folks, in order to get folks. It ought, somehow, to be the center of the clean and helpful social life of the community. It ought to be the center of the play life of the community. It ought to be the center of the intellectual life of the community and it goes without saying, that it ought to be the heart; the beating, pulsing heart of the spiritual life of the community.

The alert, upstanding, manlike movement among the rural churches to become all of this,

to rural communities, is a thrilling thing to see in motion. I have had the honor of lecturing as a part of a regular lecture schedule in many rural churches in Michigan and elsewhere. This lecture course is a part of the process of making the rural church useful to the community. Everybody goes. It is usually free, with a collection taken during the evening. Fords and automobiles line up for what seems miles. There is an air of activity and alertness everywhere. The rural church is no longer dark and cold all week and open on Sunday. It is like a beehive of happy life all week these days.

The Rev. C. M. McConnell, brother of Bishop Francis J. McConnell, is to the rural church work the same great leader that Bishop McConnell of the Methodist Church is to industrial and city work. He is in the process of establishing a Rural Hospital, a Rural School of Religious Education, a Rural Social Center, and a Rural Religious Dynamo for his entire community at Lakeville, Ohio. This is making the rural church useful with a vengeance.

In San José, California, First Methodist Church occupied a most strategic corner, perhaps the most valuable corner in the city. When I went to that beautiful church, several years ago, I found the front entrance barred with spiked iron gates. It had come to be a sort of tradition that these gates be locked Sunday night and not

opened all week. It was a foreboding sight, to say the kindest thing about it. The first thing I asked my board to do was to take the gates down and throw them away.

I was delighted and surprised at the alacrity with which this group of keen business men acceded to my request when I told them the spirit in which it was made. Neither did they want anything in or about their church that seemed to warn folks to stay away week-days. They did not want iron gates up, if iron gates suggested that folks were not wanted.

I believe that most any group of earnest Christian men will act in the same generous way. I do not believe that it is the fault of the men of our churches when iron gates remain up, with their foreboding appearance.

These gates show that the churches do not expect to do things week-days.

They are vivid, cold proof that the church has no "Great Expectations" in between Sundays. But the average official board will take them down and sell them to the junkman if they have the proper leadership from their pastors, thank God; for the laymen have been the first to see that the church must produce, if it deserves to use valuable land in a great city.

It was hot summer weather. The Santa Clara valley can be pretty hot at midday. I noticed that when I entered our great church from this

heat that it was always cool inside. So I put out the sign reproduced on page 167.

Hundreds of people in a week took advantage of this offer. We had the big front doors of the church opened and folks who were waiting for cars, tired women, women with bundles and babies, found it a blessed relief as they waited for Interurban Cars. Once I saw a woman cross herself as she entered the church to wait for a car. She looked around for Holy water but there was none. But that didn't deter her from dropping into a seat and looking at the beautifully restful windows in the coolness. The church was serving her. It was making itself useful.

I know one church, Central Methodist in Detroit, which runs a series of Pipe Organ Recitals for working girls at the noon hour. It is located in the very heart of that great city. It is making its great organ useful to humanity.

I know a church in New York City that offers a reading room, and one in San Francisco which offers a Kindergarten to mothers who work out all day and may be relieved of the burden and wear of the care of their own little tots. I know another church that has a daily clinic to which the poor of its neighborhood may come each day with their ailments and get free treatment and advice. There is also a lawyer available who will take the cases of the poor free of charge. Lawyers and doctors and dentists of any great

**AS COOL AS A CAVE
COME IN AND REST, FOR
THIS CHURCH IS YOURS
IT EXISTS TO SERVE YOU!**



**THE BEAUTIFUL PICTURES
YOU WILL LIKE, AND YOU
MAY SIT AND MEDITATE
AS YOU REST. WAIT
FOR YOUR CAR INSIDE**

church are usually glad to give this service to those who are poor.

I know of one city church that throws its great rooms open for the meeting place of labor unions, of High "Y" Clubs, of Literary Clubs, and of a Rotary Club in one instance.

"Why do you do it?" I asked the pastor.

"For two reasons: Because I get them in the habit of coming to this church and consequently get them coming to our services; and second: because I want this great church building to be useful to this community," he said.

During the Automobile Shut-Down in Detroit a boy in a Sunday School Class of St. Mark's Methodist Church suggested to the pastor that he open a reading room for the men and boys who had been thrown out of work by the closed shops. He also suggested that the Gymnasium be opened to those boys every afternoon. The pastor was glad to agree to this sensible request and for weeks throngs used the offered courtesy and the church had the feeling that it was being useful to a lot of boys when they would otherwise have had no place to go.

Another church that I know opened its offices for Headquarters for the Community Drive. One church allows the Recreation League to work through its Gymnasium and rooms. One had the Symphony Concerts in its spacious quarters. One allows a big Open Forum of unde-

nominal auspices to use its auditorium on Sunday afternoons. Another is planning to allow a great group of Italians to use its auditorium for their church since they have none of their own.

The inevitable result of making the church building useful to a community is that of getting the community in the good habit of going in the general physical direction of that church. It gets them to feeling at home in that particular church. They get to feeling that the church is theirs. It wins folks in the end!

St. Mark's, Detroit, and dozens of such churches in America, are open day and night. My boyhood church at home closed Sunday night to remain closed until Wednesday for the mid-week prayer meeting. Then it closed again until Sunday morning.

St. Mark's sees as high as ten thousand people pass its doors each week. Its bowling alley, its gymnasium, its kindergarten, its roof garden, and its hundred or more club rooms are always open. From eight in the morning until eleven at night it is a beehive of activity. The modern church has sold its iron gates to the junkman.

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Wesley Biblical Seminary Library



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